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THE King's Speech is on the whole more interesting for what it does not say than for what it does. But it contains one fairly definite promise that the Government will aim at clearing up our own and other people's mess by international action. The Prime Minister in the debate on the Address dotted the i's and crossed the t's of this passage. "You cannot finally deal with the financial and industrial position of this country," he said, "without considering it in relation to the weaknesses abroad." And he is therefore "getting into the necessary international conferences and negotiations." If these preliminaries justify Mr. MacDonald's optimism about the results of M. Laval's visit to Washington, we shall be delighted. Our own gloomy view of that jaunt seems at present to be confirmed by the rumour of French insistence on Germany paying her reparations and letting her commercial debts go hang, if need be.

* * *

What is urgently needed now is an international agreement to deal boldly and sanely with all the mischiefs of debts and reparations and high tariff walls. If Mr. MacDonald is prepared to push, and to push hard, for that, he will have not only his parliamentary majority, but the whole nation, behind him. And he may make an impression at long last on a timorous America and a domineering France. In the meantime, we are relying on the Government to do its part in preventing a catastrophe on the other side of the world. The Prime Minister is alive, we are sure, to the danger in Manchuria and the threat to the whole edifice of the League. But some of his followers may think that from military as well as from commercial troubles an Empire ring-fence offers us a snug refuge. That is a childish illusion, and we hope Mr. MacDonald will show no weakness towards it. If the National Government fails to support the Covenant in this crisis, it will have put the first big nail in its own coffin.

* * *

Tariffs are not mentioned in the King's Speech; there is only a non-committal allusion to the problem of the balance of trade. So Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Runciman, both cheered on by Mr. MacDonald at the Guildhall, are left to fight the first round between them, with the Cabinet, including Mr. Snowden, waiting to join in as soon as the issues are defined. This, so far as we can see, rules out any move towards a tariff to come into force this year, or even any lesser emergency

measures directed against "dumping." For, if the tariff issue is still unsettled after the election, there is bound to be a tussle over it within the Government's own ranks; and even if the tariffists in the end get some of their own way, there will be a great deal of arguing and bargaining before they do. Sir Henry Page Croft and his friends do not hide their impatience at the Prime Minister's caution. They want action. But Mr. MacDonald is not an easy man to hurry. He loves turning a problem over and over before announcing what he is going to do. There will, therefore, hardly be a tariff just yet.

* * *

The Prime Minister made an intriguing reference to stabilising the pound, which looked at first sight as if it meant a great deal, but appeared, on further analysis, to admit of a dozen possible interpretations. Great Britain is to stabilise the pound as soon as possible. Yes; but how soon will it be possible? Does Mr. MacDonald mean that steps are to be taken in the very near future to peg the pound at some fixed exchange value—as soon, say, as the present seasonal difficulties are over? That would indeed be important, and in our view disquieting, news; for it is not yet possible to say whereabouts it is best for the external value of the pound to settle down. But perhaps Mr. MacDonald did not mean that at all; since he went on to say that our policy about the pound must depend on policies and events in other countries. Very probably he does not know what he means, but wishes to give the world an assurance that, at some future date, it is our intention to give the pound again a stable external value. But not its old value, we trust: there was no hint in the Prime Minister's speech of any intention to try to force sterling back to its former parity.

* * *

And what of the balance of trade? It is to be balanced somehow, but we are told nothing about the means. In some quarters it is being said that our departure from the gold standard has already solved automatically the problem of the balance of international payments, since, no longer settling differences in gold, we are bound to strike a balance by means of the fluctuating exchange. That, it is argued, is bound to discourage imports and encourage exports enough, in the long run, to make the account balance. There is in this a barren theoretical truth, if a balance of any sort is all that concerns us. But it does not follow that any balance secured thus will give us resources for overseas investment, or even be a real balance at all, apart from capital transactions such as short borrowing or lending or the sale of existing overseas investments. The real problem of the balance of trade is not automatically solved by our going off the gold standard; and, while the depreciation of sterling must have some effect in checking imports and increasing exports, it does not follow that depreciation, within the limits within which we are likely to let it happen, will have enough effect. It is hardly to be supposed that, if we intend to stabilise later, we shall leave sterling entirely uninfluenced by banking operations in the meantime. The Prime Minister says we are to take steps to maintain internal purchasing power; but we cannot do that unless we keep the rise in import prices within bounds.

Mr. Churchill, in the debate on Wednesday, admitted that the Post Office Savings scare had no foundation whatever. The practice of investing part of these moneys in the Unemployment Fund, he said, was started by Sir Austen Chamberlain, and continued by Mr. Baldwin, himself and Mr. Snowden. There was nothing improper or risky in it. Only, he remarked airily, he did not believe that this scare had any effect on the result of the election. We are positive that it had a great deal; many candidates have assured us that it was a real "Red Letter" which influenced hosts of voters at the last moment. The episode was highly discreditable, and perhaps Mr. Runciman will now explain how he came to associate himself with it—and if he has no explanation he might make a public apology.

* * *

So Mr. Thomas is to be given another trip round the world, in preparation for the Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa next summer. Great Britain's suspension of the gold standard does give a better chance of making special economic arrangements with the Dominions, since their currencies will mostly follow sterling rather than gold. There is a real opportunity, which should not be missed, of increasing Empire trade. But is there a case on this account for sending Mr. Thomas round the Empire—except, of course, for the benefit of his education? The need now is not for an enthusiastic commercial traveller, but rather for an emissary with a clear understanding of economic and financial issues. It is no disrespect to Mr. Thomas's qualities to say that this is hardly his line. There may, indeed, be danger in opening up separate negotiations with the various Dominions, unless they are very tactfully handled. If Mr. Thomas confines himself to boost and uplift, no harm will be done. But the Beaverbrook papers are already alarmed, dreading, no doubt, that Empire Free Trade may vanish if too closely investigated on the spot. Even those who do not aim at a tariff wall round the Empire, and only hope for improved trade relations with the Dominions, have some cause to fear the results if Mr. Thomas starts negotiating with Mr. Bennett or Mr. Scullin in advance of the Conference.

* * *

A fortnight ago we said that many Liberals who had supported the National Government during the Election would shortly feel that this journal had been right in refusing to follow the general stampede. Our prophecy is being fulfilled even more speedily than we expected. One well-known Labour Minister who was defeated at the polls has already received four hundred individual letters of regret from constituents who voted against him. And now Professor Gilbert Murray, in a nobly expressed letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, makes a public confession of error and repentance on behalf of himself and of at least half a dozen Liberal friends. He deeply regrets supporting the National Government, denounces as a fraud the scare that the pound was in danger, expresses grave doubts about the future of international policy at the mercy of a Conservative majority and, in short, explains in a series of beautifully phrased paragraphs that he and many others have made fools of themselves.

THE TEST OF THE LEAGUE

NEXT week the League of Nations will be put to the severest test it has had to face in the twelve years of its existence. There seems no hope now of an eleventh-hour repentance on the part of Japan. She has substantial grievances against the Chinese; but they have now become irrelevant. The one relevant issue is whether a State-member of the League, a signatory of the Covenant and the Kellogg Pact, shall take warlike action in defence of its interests. We are very well aware that the Japanese argue that they have violated no pledges, that their original invasion and their continued occupation of Manchuria constitute a mere police precaution, and are warranted by the impotence of the Chinese to keep order in the country. But this is an argument *ex post facto*. At the outset the Japanese Foreign Office and the more moderate and honest section of the Cabinet did not take that view; they have since been drawn into the net spread by the military party. And if there were Japanese who did not believe in the soundness of their case, how could it be supposed that the Chinese would admit it, or would trust the assertions of good will in which Tokio has been so prolific?

An astonishing memorandum has recently been published which is said to have been drawn up by Baron Tanaka and presented to the Emperor in 1927. Here is outlined a Machiavellian policy for the conquest of China and then of all the Far East. This campaign for a new continental empire is to begin in Manchuria with a rapid and ruthless system of economic and military measures, an unparalleled mixture of violence and cunning. Railway development would play a large part in it, and so would financial jugglings. The unfortunate Koreans would be used to undermine Chinese authority, and ultimately to take up arms against China and be backed or suppressed by Japan at her discretion. We do not suggest that this monstrous plan represents the views of the Government or of any serious body of Japanese opinion. We do not even know whether the document is authentic or not. What we do know is that the first steps of the plan have actually been carried out and that some of those who are said to cherish these wild ambitions of national aggrandisement are encamped at this moment in Manchuria. The facts, let alone the document, are enough to alarm and inflame Chinese opinion. It is imperative, if a way out of the present *impasse* is to be found, that China should be able to put some modicum of trust in the good faith of the Japanese. There is one way, and one way only, in which Japan can now prove her good faith, and that is by the prompt withdrawal of her armies from Manchuria.

The Council of the League will meet in Paris on November 16th. Paris has been chosen because this will make it easier for an American representative of ambassadorial or ministerial rank to attend. The co-operation of the United States is obviously of great importance, and we welcome the report that the attitude of Washington is stiffening. But what is the Council going to do? It will probably make desperate efforts to bring the Japanese to reason. It may, and we sincerely hope it will, find some formula which can be accepted without damage to the rights or legitimate interests of either party, and without detriment to the slowly growing body of principles which are the beginning of a rule of law among nations. But on the main point it cannot give way. Japan must honour her own signature, or incur the penalties of the aggressor. And if M. Briand and his colleagues are to stand firm on this, they must have the unqualified backing of the Governments and the peoples they represent. Let us face the facts squarely. The League of Nations is not a piece of automatic machinery. It requires to be put in motion by the will of the States-members; if it is to take action the action must be that of those several States. In the present case, should all efforts at conciliation break down, Great Britain may be asked to join in denouncing Japan as a violator of the Covenant and in breaking off diplomatic relations with her. The withdrawal of ambassadors is a grave step, and it could hardly fail, if it were carried out by the Great Powers, to make its effect felt in Tokio. It is true that the suggestion has been treated with indignant contempt by the Japanese; but this need not be taken at its face value. Moral and diplomatic isolation is not a thing which any Power regards lightly in the world to-day. There would be at least a reasonable hope that it—or even the definite threat of it—would count with the more moderate elements in Japan and fortify them against the militarists who have put them in so false a position. If this should prove useless, then there remains the possibility of action under Article 16, which enjoins the application of economic sanctions. To that extreme we still trust that it will not be necessary to go. But it is part of the Covenant, and Great Britain has signed the Covenant, and Great Britain, if it meant anything by its signature, and if it believes in peace and not in war, if it stands by the attempt that has been made since 1918 to substitute international law for international anarchy, is bound to uphold the Covenant.

We believe that public opinion in this country is overwhelmingly loyal to the principles of the League. The jeers that appear daily in the Beaverbrook and Rothermere press represent the views of their writers and not of the great bulk of their readers. There cannot be many English men or women so imbecile as to assent to the statements that the League of Nations is a body for stirring up strife, and that we can best ensure our own safety and promote the cause of peace in the world by dishonouring our obligations, "ceasing to bully Japan," and shaking the dust of Geneva off our feet for good and all. The King's Speech on Tuesday affirmed the intention of Mr. MacDonald's Government to "continue its active interest in the work of the League of Nations," and it will be for the new Foreign Secretary, Sir John Simon, to show in Paris next week how active that interest is. It will be for the rest of us, whether Conservative, Liberal or Labour, to support his efforts to prevent war. But war will not be avoided by the League consenting to a dishonourable peace imposed by Japanese violence. If the Council—if the nations represented by the Council—consent to that, they will destroy the *raison d'être* of the League. They will be deliberately restoring war as an instrument, and the most potent instrument, of policy.

THE INDIAN TRAGEDY

FIVE years ago there were two facts about India which were obvious to everyone who was interested in the subject. The first was that Montagu's scheme of dyarchy, instituted in 1920, had been a failure. The second was that nothing short of granting the Provincial Councils the right of running their own affairs and setting up a responsible federal government would give any stability, or any hope of a permanent settlement. It was indisputable that such a course involved risks, and that consequently some safeguards would be necessary during the transitional period. It was clear that in the working out of such a scheme there would be disputes between groups of Indians. We ourselves had done nothing to lessen those disputes, and had encouraged religious groups to form themselves into political parties by instituting communal representation, and by summoning members of advisory bodies on a communal basis. The fundamentals of the problem do not alter from year to year. The Simon Commission and the two sessions of the Round Table Conference have added nothing to the knowledge required by the British Government. The Commission and the Conference may have done something to educate the British public, but no new fact has emerged which alters the diagnosis of the case. Nor has anything occurred to ease those difficulties which are due to disputes between religious groups. By giving prominence to the extremists in each party they have accentuated the communal trouble, which has never been worse than to-day either as between the leaders of opinion, or amongst the rank and file.

The most that can be claimed for the four years' delay is that the Princes have defined their attitude towards Federation, and we now know that the Political Department was wrong in taking the view that the States would be unwilling to come into an all-India Federation. The wish in this case was clearly father to the thought. For the rest, we must look back on four unhappy years marked by a general deterioration in the prosperity and stability of India while three successive governments have shelved the main question of the future constitution. It would now appear that there is a strong element in the new Government which is in favour of a further policy of drift on the reputed grounds that a group of Moslems, who owe their position in the Conference to their keen interest in the claims of their community, cannot come to an agreement with some equally keen partisans of the Hindu and Sikh communities about the exact allocation of seats in two Provinces.

It is easy to put forward a theoretical justification of this policy of drift on the grounds that it should not be necessary for England to adjudicate on this matter, but no practical politician is likely to be deceived. Mr. MacDonald would receive very short shrift from his party if he refused to take any action with regard to tariffs until Mr. Amery and Sir Herbert Samuel had put forward an agreed policy on this subject, yet both are members of his party. He knows perfectly well that he will have to bring forward a policy with which both are likely to disagree, but will be prepared to accept under protest. Yet he is now asking a collection of individual Indians, faced with a much more complicated problem than that of protective tariffs, to do what he would never ask his party to do. Actually, these groups have come very close to an agreement, far closer than the extreme elements of his own party are likely to reach on the tariff question; but, chiefly owing to the existence in the Indian sphere of other minorities and other interests, it has never been possible to get a settlement signed and sealed. One powerful factor has, of course, been the vagueness of the Government's proposals with regard to the main questions between England and the suggested Federal Government. No one representing a sectional interest, Hindu, Moslem, or Sikh, cares to put his name to concessions on the communal question when he does not know whether anything is going to eventuate with regard to the main problem of the future constitution.

There is nothing to prevent Mr. MacDonald's taking the commonsense attitude and treating the communal question as the Conference has already treated the difficult question of the representation of the smaller States. These have been given a definite period in which to put forward their agreed scheme, but if this cannot be done the matter will be adjudicated by a commission appointed for the purpose. In the meantime the Conference could get on with the real work of mapping out the powers of the new Federal Government, and of deciding upon such safeguards as may be necessary with regard to financial policy and the future of the army. In all these matters, as also in regard to discrimination against Europeans, the delegates have made very considerable progress towards a settlement behind the scenes. There is no real reason to let the Conference fail. If a policy of drift is adopted it will be done deliberately, because the National Cabinet has decided that such is the best course.

It is clear that the usual reasons for delay do not apply to modern India. No one in his senses can imagine that India will become "more fit for self-government" after a few more years. Every month under present conditions is making the task of a future Federal Government more difficult, and the breakdown of the present Conference would mean that a large section of moderate politicians, who have tried to work the 1920 scheme, will either drop out of politics or will join some extremist section. It is equally absurd to talk about Indians after this Conference "hammering out a scheme of their own." The only united demand which is likely to come from India, if the policy of "drift" is adopted, will be a strong movement to end the British connection at all costs. We should, in fact, find ourselves without any friends. Not only would there be a powerful nationalist movement, and an almost inevitable recurrence of civil disobedience, but the embittering of communal strife after the breakdown of the Conference will enormously increase our difficulties. Events in Kashmir are proving that the role of inter-communal peacemaker is both dangerous and difficult. We have been forced into the position of offending the whole Moslem community in the North of India, while Hindu opinion, so far as it expresses itself in the rest of India, is accusing the Government partly of bolstering up an inefficient ruler, and partly of a Machiavellian scheme for absorbing another Indian state.

It would be much better to face up to the real facts of the position. We are no longer capable of carrying on the Government of India without some measure of popular support, and though the chief sufferers in the case of a breakdown of the civil government would be Indians themselves, it is unlikely that the mere fear of such a breakdown will rally support to a British Government of the present irresponsible kind. India is threatened with dangers from at least four different directions. The North-West frontier remains a perpetual menace which has certainly not got any less during the last three years. Over many parts of India there are signs of a spreading agrarian movement, which in the United Provinces and Bengal might easily develop into a kind of "Green Revolution" accompanied by the murdering of landlords and money-lenders on a large scale, and by the overwhelming of the weak police force which alone represents authority over vast areas. Then the example of Kashmir may easily spread to other States where they have incompetent, unpopular, or absentee Princes. In most cases there are no local forces available for repressing such an outbreak, and, as in Kashmir, there may be a call for Imperial troops. Finally, we may have the extremist element in the Congress adding fuel to any local conflagration in these three spheres, and at the same time embarrassing the Government by organising the kind

of passive resistance to authority which is such an effective weapon in the East. India has an immense population, chronically under-employed and vastly patient. Moslems and Akali Sikhs have showed themselves willing to be swept by thousands into prisons on some purely communal issue. The Untouchables at Nasik get themselves arrested *en masse* in order to enforce their claim to use a temple. It is even easier for the Congress to organise this form of demonstration on racial grounds.

The Government of India has had to face each of these four troubles during the last few years, and at times it has been clear that its resources have been stretched to the utmost. So far both the police and the army have stood the strain, but there is no large margin of reserve power in India, or for that matter in England. For some years the Government of India has been acting as "an alien government under orders to quit"; its whole organisation has been modified to meet these expected changes. No one with any knowledge of modern India imagines that one can put back the clock in the Churchillian sense, or has any illusions about the steady deterioration which must occur in every branch of the public services when there is no certainty about the future. The only possible justification for the policy of drift would be the chance of some new and favourable factor in the situation which might be expected after a few months—a wave of loyalty to British rule, a sudden return to prosperity, or some decisive action that would settle the frontier problem. There is not the faintest reason to expect any of these things, or to think that England will ever have a better chance of settling the Indian problem than to-day.

THE OLD LABOUR PARTY AND THE NEW

I SUPPOSE we Socialists ought all to be going about with our tails between our legs and the look of dogs that have been properly chastised for being naughty. At any rate, I suppose that is how Mr. Snowden, who laid on the lash with a will, thinks we ought to behave. But somehow or other I neither feel in the least like that myself, nor can I find any semblance of such a mood among my political friends. We have been beaten, no doubt, thoroughly, devastatingly, overwhelmingly beaten; and it is no joke for the country to be in for a longish run of unrestrained Tory Government—for I do not think Mr. MacDonald can restrain the Tories for long, even if he has the will. But all the same, the predominant feeling in my mind, and in the minds of most of those whom I meet, is not of depression, but rather of elation and escape.

For, all through these last two years—and to a considerable extent ever since 1924—we have been living under a shadow. As loyal supporters of the working-class movement, we have felt it to be our duty to give the Labour Party steady support, in office and in opposition alike. But all the time we have been growingly conscious that, under the leadership of Mr. MacDonald and the veto of Mr. Snowden, there was mighty little chance of our hopes of a forward policy being realised. And, above all, during the past two years we have felt black disappointment, not so much at the Labour Government's failure to make headway against a very difficult world economic situation, as at its reluctance even to try in office the remedies which it proposed while it was in opposition. There have been consolations, I know; and we have tried to make the most of them. Mr. Henderson has been admirable at the Foreign Office, and we have felt his good work in Europe to be some compensation for the dry rot at home. Dr. Addison, too, at the Ministry of Agriculture, did unexpectedly well; and there were other bright spots here and there. But in home affairs nothing could make up for the double failure to tackle either unemployment or industrial reorganisation.

We made allowances, of course, for the Government's lack of a parliamentary majority, for the obstruction of the House of Lords, and for the want of adequate control over parliamentary time. We allowed too for the exceedingly bad luck that brought the Labour Government to office only a few months before the beginning of the world slump. But we did not feel that these things, though they extenuated, really explained the Government's inaction. We were driven, against our will, to the belief that certain of its leading members did not want to act, even where they could have acted with Liberal support, and no longer believed in the policy on the basis of which they had been raised to office. And so, having lost these leaders who had ceased to lead, we have too great a load off our minds to be greatly depressed at losing much else as well.

It is my own view that, all through, the two men who wrecked the Labour policy were the Prime Minister and Mr. Snowden. But they did this in quite different ways. Mr. MacDonald's fault was an inability to decide on action, or rather a positive preference for indecision and perpetual debate. He loved to hear the *pros* and *cons* of every issue—and then to hear them over again. He hated the irrevocability of action. Mr. Snowden's case was different; for he was positively against almost everything his party wanted. And he was so much the most decided member of the Cabinet that his veto commonly settled the issue.

This is, of course, a strong criticism of the Cabinet as a whole, including the present leaders of the Labour Party who have gone down in the fray. Mr. Henderson, who might have rallied them, was occupied with foreign affairs; and it really appears that there was no one else strong enough to bear Mr. Snowden down. It is, of course, very hard for a Cabinet to act unless it gets an effective lead from the Prime Minister; and that the Labour Cabinet never had. We need not, therefore, blame Mr. MacDonald's late colleagues overmuch. But the fact remains that, collectively, they made a poor show before their leader scuttled the ship, and a still poorer show while the ship was sinking under Mr. Snowden's bombardment. It is no disrespect to Mr. Henderson and one or two others to say that the Labour Party has been weak in sagacious leadership, and is now weak also in popular appeal. For Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Snowden were undoubtedly the popular figures of whom the electors thought as the leaders of Labour.

All the same, my chief feeling is one of relief; for I believe this set-back affords a real chance of rebuilding the political Labour Movement on sounder lines. I shall be glad if *some* of the defeated leaders never come back; and I think it would be sheer disaster if Mr. MacDonald or Mr. Thomas—to say nothing of Mr. Snowden—ever returned to the fold. For I think the time has come to stop definitely the attempt to build up the Labour Party on the forsaken inheritance of reformist Liberalism, and to set to work instead to create a real Socialist Party.

I am sure the policy on which the Labour Party has so far mainly relied in its appeals to the electorate is played out. No party can hope to advance much farther along the line of improving social services out of increased taxation, while leaving the conduct of industry, commerce and finance in private hands. The *Nation*, as Mr. Harold Wright has recently reminded us, announced the impending end of this policy some years ago, in a series of articles on "The Limits of Insular Socialism." But the real criticism of it is that it was never within a thousand miles of being Socialism at all; for it was based not on creating Socialist institutions as a source of funds for a progressive social policy, but on milking the capitalist. Labour did not milk him dry, by any manner of means; but it did get to the point at which it was very difficult to impose fresh taxes without their having *somewhere* an adverse effect on enterprise and investment, and so tending to aggravate unemployment and increase its cost.

But the Labour Party had grown so used to preaching

the virtues of redistribution, and was also so conscious that there were plenty of rich people left who could afford heavier taxation, that its members could not easily change their tune. Moreover, the alternative policy of rapid and widespread socialisation did not seem to be practicable under the existing parliamentary conditions; and little or nothing had been done to educate up to it the mass of the electors who voted Labour. It seemed—and to a great extent it actually was—impossible for the time being.

This, however, meant in effect that the Labour Party was caught between two impossibilities—an old policy that was played out, and a new one for which the conditions were not yet ripe. It was therefore bound to fail, and almost certain to meet with a severe electoral defeat. I should have liked to see it, some time ago, boldly proclaim the passing of the old ideas inherited from an earlier day, and court defeat with a forthright policy of Socialist construction. For to do this would have been the beginning of the electoral education that has still to come. It would have involved a beating; but any policy worth having meant that.

Instead of facing the dilemma boldly, the second Labour Government broke asunder, and the leaders who remained had to face the electors under about the most adverse conditions that can possibly be conceived. I will not pretend that I foresaw the magnitude of the ensuing set-back, though I expected the "Nationalists" to come back with a handsome majority. But now, in retrospect, what surprises me is the large number of electors who did vote Labour in spite of everything. They were subjected to bombardment by press and wireless, bewildered by the loss of their best-known leaders, hamstrung by Mr. Snowden, and given no clear guidance by their own champions, who allowed themselves to be inveigled into an unproductive controversy about the past instead of ignoring Mr. Snowden and talking resolutely about the future. And yet many millions of them stood firm, and in a great many places there was no fall at all in the Labour vote. I find that rather wonderful, and most encouraging for the future.

But what of Trade Union dictatorship? In so far as the Trade Unions did stop the late Government from giving in to the loan-mongers and cutting wages and the benefits of the unemployed, I am thoroughly grateful to them. Nor am I one of those who fear Trade Union dictation for the future, or wish to see Labour a classless party. Far from it. I belong to the Labour Party precisely because it is, to some extent, though not so much as I should like it to be, a class party. I mean, of course, not a party whose adherents are all of one class (or I should not be in it) but a party which bases itself solidly on the defence of the working class, and seeks to represent the aspirations of that class towards a different, non-capitalist society. I am under no delusion that all the workers are convinced Socialists: but I do believe that the chance of getting Socialism in Great Britain depends absolutely on getting the workers to demand it, and on using their organisation and their loyalty as instruments for its making. Labour, if it became a national, classless party, would lose all its effective driving force. Indeed, it was largely because it was becoming such a party that it had to go down to defeat.

In the next few years, we Socialists shall have to build the Labour Party up again, and build it on essentially different foundations. We shall have to get back to straight Socialist propaganda, restated and reinterpreted in relation to the problems of to-day and to-morrow. And we shall come back to power, I hope and believe, when we do come back at all, not to repeat the vacillations and tinkerings of 1924 and of 1929—1931, but determined to institute at once a large instalment of positive socialisation of the vital industries and services, and ready to do battle manfully with whatever stands in the way. In short, I think the coming Labour Party will be far more extreme than the old one. But its extremism will be essentially constructive and realistic.

G. D. H. COLE.

A LONDON DIARY

THE present position of the Prime Minister fascinates me like a detective story in serial form which has just broken off with the words—"to be continued in our next." Papers which support the Government represent Mr. MacDonald as the one man in the country who is able and willing to make bold decisions involving action. Mr. MacDonald is over sixty, and no one who had worked closely with him during his career up to the time when he formed the National Government took that view of him. I remember in the dark days when he and E. D. Morel were the two most unpopular men in England walking away from some U.D.C. meeting down Charing Cross Road with Morel and listening to him fuming against "Mac" for never making up his mind—"and what is more," said Morel, standing still in Trafalgar Square, "if Ramsay knows that he has to get as quickly as possible from here to the House of Commons, you'll see him set out *viâ* Piccadilly or Ludgate Circus."

* * *

Morel's view of the Prime Minister is confirmed by everything that I have ever heard about him from his colleagues in the two Labour Governments and from my own personal knowledge of him. For two years he was head of a Labour Government, and found it impossible to make up his mind to take any positive step of any kind to deal with the internal economic situation. When the crisis came in August, it may be argued, he did at last act by forming the National Government, and so took a positive decision. But even in that case really he had the choice between the positive act of resigning, and the negative act of remaining Prime Minister in the National Government, which he was asked by the King and others to form—and he chose to remain where he was. I do not think it fanciful to see, even in small things that have happened since, the persistence of this constitutional inability to accept responsibility for action. When heckled at Seaham about Lord Londonderry's presence in the Government, he said in effect that the appointment had been made by the Conservative leader. (Are we to infer that Lord Londonderry's rapid promotion to Cabinet rank is also due to Mr. Baldwin?) The really interesting thing is that Mr. MacDonald seems to have got himself at last into a position in which lack of decision must involve immediate disaster. The political-psychological problem which fascinates me is this: Can a man of over sixty change his whole character and, if not, how long will the Prime Minister succeed in wobbling between tariffs and Free Trade, between the Conservative hosts and the handful of Liberals, between his Chancellor of the Exchequer and his Lord Privy Seal?

* * *

The other day I had the opportunity of hearing the private opinion of several distinguished Frenchmen, Germans, and Austrians—all belonging to the parties of the Left—upon the social and political conditions in the various countries. The vision that I got of Europe was really terrifying. The economic condition is growing steadily worse. Unemployment in Germany is, of course, increasing, and even in France unemployment is much more serious than is admitted officially. Economic deterioration is being accompanied by an increasing wave of political unrest and reaction, which is not confined to Germany and Austria, but is active in the Balkans. In Germany the republican and constitutional parties of the Centre and the Social Democrats are losing ground to the Nazis on the Right and the Communists on the Left, both of whom are armed. The danger of confused disorders and useless bloodshed is great, though the Government holds one strong card in the fact that it can probably rely upon the Reichswehr. All my German informants agree that whether the Government gets a respite depends to a great extent upon whether the short-term credits are prolonged in February. The

position in Austria is even more unstable, and the Austrians have no doubt themselves that there will be another armed attempt by the Heimwehr to establish a Fascist regime.

* * *

I grow more astonished every day at the stories I hear of the persons chosen by the electorate to represent them in this election. The prize, I suspect, goes to a lady who won a remarkable victory, apparently without even pretending to any qualification except feminine charm. She travelled about the constituency in a large car decorated with a streamer "Buy British." A rude fellow asked her why, if she wanted people to buy British, she herself drove a car of American make. Her reply was to wag a coquettish finger at him and say, "Ha! Ha! there you have me!" The same lady was asked a question at a meeting. Quite unembarrassed she wagged the same finger at the speaker and said: "Do you know, I have the answer to that question written down on a bit of paper, but I've left it in my little reticule on my dressing table at home!"

* * *

I have heard of several young Conservative members of this strange House of Commons who won what were thought hopeless constituencies, and who now feel embarrassed and even in some cases aggrieved to find themselves M.P.s. One of them travelled up to London after an astonishing victory in a mining area and fell into talk with a travelling companion, who seemed to know a lot about the mining industry. The new M.P. explained that he had only fought for fun and patriotism on the assurance that his return was impossible and that, among other inconveniences, he felt (as a modest fellow would) some embarrassment in representing miners whose industry and way of life were utterly unknown to him. Could this travelling companion perhaps tell him something about mining or tell him how to find out a bit about it? I do not know what answer he got. But he happened to be talking to a defeated Minister who is one of the first authorities in the country on the mining industry.

* * *

In another odd case, I can give the names. Some months ago a young man named Watt applied to be enrolled as a student at the London School of Economics. He was accepted, but has had to postpone the commencement of his academic career until the New Year, because he has unexpectedly become a Member of Parliament in the meantime. In fact, he is the Member for Keighley, where he defeated Mr. Lees-Smith, the late President of the Board of Education, whose non-parliamentary profession is that of Reader in Public Administration at the London School of Economics. Mr. Lees-Smith now returns to lecture on political institutions and he will no doubt have the opportunity of explaining the principles of the British Constitution and of parliamentary procedure—which are his special subjects—to Mr. Watt, M.P., who so signally defeated him in his own constituency.

* * *

Apropos of the quotation which I gave last week from Lady Oxford's Autobiography as prophetic of the present Cabinet, a correspondent reminds me of an observation made at the time when Disraeli belonged to the Country Party:

"Our team," said an aristocratic M.P. and cricketer, "is the Gentlemen of England, with one Player given."

The Tories have generally had "one Player given"—Disraeli, Joseph Chamberlain, Lloyd George; but in these degenerate days nearly half the Cabinet seems to fall in that category.

* * *

The following problem was recently set as a kind of "intelligence test" in a Civil Service examination. Ten minutes were allowed for the solution:

A train is controlled by an engine-driver, a fireman, and a guard, whose names are Brown, Jones and Robinson, *not* respectively.

On the train are three passengers, Mr. Jones, Mr. Robinson and Mr. Brown.

Mr. Robinson lives at Leeds.

The guard lives half-way between Leeds and London.

Mr. Jones's income is £400 2s. 1d. per annum.

The guard earns in a year exactly one-third of the income of his nearest neighbour who is a passenger.

The guard's namesake lives in London.

Brown beat the fireman at billiards.

What is the name of the engine-driver?

I am told that each statement offers a clue to the solution. Can you solve it? I've not tried, but I do not feel as if I could do it in an hour or a week. But then I am not a candidate for the Civil Service. CRITIC.

RUSSIAN NOTES

V. WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

THE Soviet State, like Plato's Republic, makes the least possible discrimination between its male and female citizens. All offices and all occupations, with a very few exceptions, are open to women. The Russian Commissar of Finance is a woman, and so is the Ambassador to Norway, and women fill a number of the minor posts in the hierarchy of government and of the Communist Party. In the factories, and in outside jobs such as building and transport, the two sexes work side by side—and, of course, on the farms also. Women workers were officially estimated early in 1930 at something over one-third of those engaged in the larger units of industry, and the All-Union Council of Trade Unions states that another million have been brought in during the last twelve months. They are prohibited, as they are here and elsewhere, from working in the mines and in certain dangerous or exhausting trades. Outside these processes, however, one can see women engaged on jobs that involve a heavy physical strain. If it is too heavy, as some critics aver, the excuse is the urgency of the Five Year Plan.

So far as wages are concerned, the Russian woman worker is, theoretically at least, in a better position than her sisters abroad. The principle of "equal pay for equal work" is laid down by law. But this does not mean that women in general earn as much as men. The majority of them are in the less skilled and lower-paid categories, and the extension of the piece-work system will, no doubt, tend still more in favour of the men. As regards social insurance, however, there is no inequality. Men and women get the same benefits—and neither pays any contribution. In the matter of maternity, Russia is exceptionally generous (or should one say sensible?). The manual worker has two months off before her confinement and two months after, the office worker six weeks before and six weeks after, and in both cases full pay is allowed for the whole period. An extra benefit is given for the *layette*, and free medical treatment or advice is available in hospitals, clinics or infant welfare centres.

The most striking change in the position of women is not in the sphere of politics or of work, but in their private relations. The Soviet laws regarding marriage and divorce have excited world-wide curiosity—and a part of the world, at any rate, is making an arrant fool of itself about them. Those who have examined the system and its results are within their rights in expressing doubt or disapproval. But the cry of "nationalisation of women" is simply ignorant or malicious twaddle. It would be just as true—and just as untrue—to talk of the "nationalisation of men." Women are not the prey of men in Russia to-day. Promiscuity is not the rule, nor the fashion. Indeed, the Communists frown upon licentiousness, and sometimes punish it severely. Prostitutes may survive here and there, but they are very little in evidence. There are no brothels,

licensed by the State, as there are all over the Continent, or unlicensed, but tolerated by public opinion and only disturbed by an occasional police raid, as in this country. Nobody makes a living by pornography in Russia. And the sex-stuff popularised by the Hollywood film producers leaves Moscow cold.

The ceremony of marriage in the U.S.S.R. is as easy as it is here. The State merely wants to know the relevant facts—and perhaps I should add, to impart some relevant information. This it does with a vengeance in the anteroom of the registry office. The walls are covered with pictures, diagrams and models, showing the sexual organs and the processes of gestation. Other placards call attention to the hospitals and clinics where abortions will be properly performed; for abortion is legal in the U.S.S.R., and only discouraged, I understand, in the case of the first child. And mixed with these will be alluring pictures of happy families, eating, sleeping, cleaning up, or what not. After inspecting this exhibition—or ignoring it, if they choose—the intending spouses go in to the registrar and furnish the necessary particulars of their identity, age, and so on. They must also make a solemn declaration that each is fully informed as to the state of the other's health; and a false declaration is a criminal offence. The couple may be married in a church as well, if they wish, but the State only recognises a civil wedding. Marriage involves no subjection whatever of the wife to the husband. She may take his name or keep her own maiden name, or the man may take hers. Any property she had before marrying remains her own; any acquired by either party afterwards is joint. Each is liable for the support of the other in case of incapacitation or unemployment. And this liability applies also to couples who are living together unmarried—which they can do without any social stigma.

Divorce is equally easy, or even easier. It may be obtained—also at the registry office—on the application of either spouse, and no ground need be alleged. The registrar only requires to be satisfied that the children, if there are any, will be properly provided for and that if either party is unable to work, the other will contribute to his or her support. If there is a dispute on those points that cannot be settled by the registrar, it goes to a court of law. The result of this facility has naturally been a great increase in the number of divorces, though the number is not quite so prodigious as some think. I have no up-to-date statistics. But I am told that three or four years ago the figures (for the Russian Republic) showed one divorce to every four marriages, as compared with one to six in the United States of America. The rate is higher, as one would expect, in Moscow and the big towns than in the countryside. But I gather that the friendly efforts of the registrars do something to keep it down; one of them with whom I talked said that she frequently persuaded people who came for a divorce in a huff over some trifle to think better of it. However, the rate is high, and it may be argued that so large a freedom for parents must often work to the disadvantage of the children. But it is absurd to pretend that the Communists are deliberately trying to destroy family life, either by their marriage laws or by their encouragement of communal cooking and communal feeding. And if they were trying, there is singularly little evidence of their succeeding. Industrialisation and the mechanisation of agriculture must, of course, disintegrate the family as an economic unit. But in its essential form, as an intimate association of parents and children, I do not believe that it is in any danger of disappearance.

Let us now turn to the children themselves. There can be no question of the advance that has been made in their welfare. The State is solicitous for their education, for their nourishment, for their physical culture, for their medical treatment. It begins its concern for them before they are born, and it carries it on through infancy with crèches, nursery schools and kindergartens, clinics, hospitals, and sanatoria, as well as by propaganda and pressure on the parents. The provision of all these things is as yet far from adequate, but it is going on steadily, and the results are already beginning to be apparent. The coming generation in Russia shows promise of abundant health and vigour. But this is not all. The Revolution has given the young an awe-inspiring responsibility. It has allowed them a large measure of freedom—freedom of self-expression and freedom of criticism, including criticism of their teachers and their "elders and betters," though not, I need hardly say, of Karl Marx. But it has also imposed on them the duty of thinking for and working for the community. The task of being a good citizen begins at an early age, and it does not consist merely in keeping out of the policeman's clutches. It involves doing, or at least trying to do, something useful to the State. That something may range from the helping of the Five Year Plan by hand or mouth, or both, to smelling out heresies or improving the manners and the morals of father and mother.

I should not like to say that all the children in Russia get full marks all the time; for Russian children are not superhuman. But the discipline of the schools and the Communist Party is a potent instrument, and has achieved remarkable successes in the creation of a group spirit, of altruism, and of juvenile zeal. The manifestations of this zeal are sometimes amusing. There is a story told by Krupskaya of a child of eleven soundly rating a thousand textile workers for their slackness about education. And another boy of the same age (at a children's conference held to discuss polytechnical schools!) put the directors of the factory to open shame. "You talk about what you will do for the school," he said, "but when we started to build a rabbit hutch for the study of rabbits, you would not give us any nails." Yet, if there is some precocity and priggishness among these boys and girls, there is also a good deal of the virtue that is claimed for our Scouts and Guides. And may not the ideal of social service be a better one with which to imbue the young than that of our own Dr. Samuel Smiles, of blessed and persistent memory? In any case, whatever be its merits or demerits, this youth movement, fostered by the Communist Party, and organised in the Young Communist League, the Pioneers, and the Little Octobrists, is an extraordinarily powerful force in the moulding of the new Russia. Of this I shall say more in my next and last article. C. M. LLOYD.

THE INEVITABILITY OF BRIGANDAGE

as explained by a Corsican whom its threatened suppression has turned to a study of militaristic philosophy.

WHAT! is a doom to fall
On the brigand armed to the teeth?
Shall the carbine rust on the wall,
The stiletto sleep in its sheath?
Must we leave the thickets, disarming,
And betake us to peaceful farming
At a wretched policeman's call?

Shall we never take toll again
From the quivering trading crew?
Is the grandson to walk unslain
Of the man whom our grandsire slew?
Can the rights without which we perish
And the stainless honour we cherish
Be to alien courts made plain?

Can you change man's heart or his will?
Have you never heard of the law
Of Nature, unchanging still,
And red in tooth and in claw?
Would you fain deny the persistence
Of the struggle for mere existence
That drives us to rob and kill?

Can we rest in our beds, secure,
If you take our weapons away?
Can our manly virtues endure
If we may not plunder or slay?
As well might you ask the nations,
Forgetful of reparations,
To follow Geneva's lure!

MACFLECKNOE.

A MAN'S BODY

A KNIGHT'S bequest of his body to St. Thomas's Hospital for purposes of dissection is announced in the newspapers. Most people, I imagine, will be surprised to learn, on the authority of an official of the hospital, that the knight had no right to dispose of his body in this or any other fashion. "It is rarely," he said, "that such offers are of any real use to a hospital. It is not generally known that a man has not the right to dispose of his body. After his death it belongs to the estate."

It is a remarkable thing that the law should forbid a citizen to do as he will with what is more essentially and intimately his own than his house, his money, or his furniture. His body, indeed, is his lifelong house and as proper to him as the shell to the snail. Even during life, however, he is hampered in the use of it. He is permitted to throw it into the water if he intends some time later to bring it out again and dry it. But he is not permitted to throw it into the water if he intends to leave it there permanently. At the same time, I am not sure that the law in this matter is consciously directed against the citizen's proprietorial rights in his body. If he could leave his body permanently in the water without taking his life, and if the body caused no obstruction of the traffic and did not in other respects become a nuisance, the law, I fancy, would be indifferent. But, according to the religious theory, a man's life is not his own to take, and therefore suicide becomes a form of robbery, and is liable to prosecution as a crime.

No such objection can be made, on the other hand, to a man's arranging to dispose of his body after death. The body that he leaves to the hospital is a body from which the life will already have been taken. It can be of no use to his heirs or to anybody else. Moreover, if it belongs to the heirs instead of being posthumously at the disposal of the man whose spirit inhabited it, this seems to imply that the heirs have the right to sell it for purposes of dissection—a possibility that offends the sense of decency in a way in which the bequest of a man's own body for such purposes does not.

Many years ago one used to hear medical students discussing the question of what the dissecting schools would do when pauperism was abolished and the unclaimed bodies of paupers were no longer there to be dissected. As a rule, some youth devoted to science would express his confidence that there would always be plenty of philanthropic people who would be willing to leave their bodies to the professors of anatomy. I had myself grown up in a world in which stories of children murdered in order that the doctors might have something to dissect, and of corpses stolen from new-made graves by night for the same purpose, were as common as tales of papal atrocities. I could still point out the house in which, I was told, lived an insanely scientific doctor who lured newsboys inside his hall—innocents doomed never to see the light again. There was another house, just round the corner of the street in which I lived, that had been part of the scenery of an event as sinister. Opposite this house, I believe, the kidnappers had approached a young woman from behind, clapping a bandage over her mouth in order to carry her off to the dissectors. With great presence of mind, however, she had managed to take one of her shoes and to throw it through a window of the house, attracting the attention of the occupants, who hurried out to her rescue. Gutter-snipes who feared nothing else on earth were afraid to be seen in the neighbourhood of the college after dark lest the dissectors should seize them and drag them in. Some rationalists criticise religion on the ground that it has darkened the human imagination. But I doubt if anything darkened the imagination of children in the nineteenth century more than the science of anatomy. Perhaps, however, that is an exaggeration. There was usually an element of humour in the saga of the kidnappers and the bodysnatchers—stories of evil men foiled and put to flight, screaming with terror. The Pope was really more difficult to foil. He was distinctly more terrifying than the kidnappers.

Even without those early excesses of the anatomists, however, when the science of body-snatching was at its height, dissection is a practice that the ordinary human being finds somewhat repellent. Since it is presumably necessary, and since it is as common as lectures on jurisprudence, it is difficult to see any good reason for this aversion. Yet the fact remains that few of us would accept an invitation to visit a dissecting room. I visited one once, when my curiosity was livelier than it is now, and I found everybody perfectly happy—as happy as the Highland reaper singing as she worked—but I suppose I must always have liked the arts better than the sciences, for I should not go again. Yet, for all I know, art itself might take a medical student at work at the dissecting table for its theme and make of it something beautiful. For beauty, which was once so attractive, appears to be becoming more repellent every day. I have read books which in their simple way are more disgusting to the senses than the paupers' corpses in the dissecting room, and if we delight in the one, why not delight in the other?

I confess I admired the heroic insensitiveness of the old man at a college I once heard of who used to fetch the corpses from the infirmary on a handcart. So little was he disturbed by the grisly nature of his task that he used to draw up his handcart at a public-house on his way to the college, leave it with its burden unattended in the street, and go inside for a drink. One day, while he was inside, some medical students ran off with the cart for a joke—the one almost tragic moment of his life. After that he did not cease to go in for his drink, but he always got a small boy to keep his eye on the cart. He was a philosopher.

He was of the school of Socrates, who looked on the body as an empty shell. One would not call him particularly imaginative, but it may be that his attitude to the body will be the prevalent attitude of future times. It seems to me that the modern man is growing increasingly indifferent to the disposal of his body after death. I myself am not sure that I care so much to-day as I used to care where my body will be after death. There was a time when I hated the thought of being buried outside my own country, but I have lost most of this sepulchral patriotism, and would urge those who survive me to bury me wherever it is cheapest. The world has turned utilitarian. I once knew a man who left instructions in his will that his body was to be wrapped in a Union Jack and buried at sea. Do such fine romantical notions exist among the younger generation?

Caring comparatively little where I shall be buried, caring about little except that I shall not be buried alive, I am not sure, however, that I have arrived at an attitude of complete indifference to what happens to my body after death. I am not sure that I am yet enough of a philosopher to contemplate with resignation the prospect of its lying on the dissecting table, while medical students arrange who will have a leg and who will have the brain. I shrink from serving my kind in this fashion, and would prefer to survive myself more decently, if only in ashes. Yet, for some reason, I do not shrink as I should once have shrunk. When

many years ago I first heard that a man had left his body to be dissected, I thought of him as a kind of scientific monster. To-day I regard him as an infinitely braver and more public-spirited man than myself, and if I live another twenty years I may find myself bequeathing this trash of skin and bones with as wise a recognition of the body's worthlessness as he. That is if the law will permit me. In view of this potential gift to the nation, is it not time that the law was changed?

Y. Y.

Correspondence

[Our selection from the scores of letters again received has been made with the object of representing as great a variety of opinions as possible.—ED. N. S. & N.]

THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—At the time of writing, it appears certain that the Indian Round Table Conference will not arrive at an agreed solution of the communal problem, whether by redistribution of territories or otherwise. This is because, behind the difficulty of satisfying the delegates, lies the fact that they are not plenipotentiaries, and that they have, in reality though not in name, principals in India who do not appreciate the need of compromise.

Proposals for arbitration, so far as it is possible to judge, are equally unlikely to secure approval; because, in the absence of any agreed principle for the decision of the issues, delegates will naturally hesitate to commit vital interests to the arbitration of any persons, however able and impartial. The treatment of minorities, under the European Peace Treaties, offers no precedent, or, at all events, only a precedent which the Indian minorities, by the very nature of their claims, must inevitably repudiate.

The nearest approach to an agreed principle of decision, or to a precedent capable of application to the case, is to be found in the existing facts of the representation of minority communities in India, behind which lies the agreement between Hindu and Mohammedan leaders incorporated in the Lucknow pact of 1916; and, so long as it is made plain that the use of that precedent is provisional only, pending future agreement between the parties on some different arrangement, there is good hope of such a degree of general acquiescence as will make it possible to proceed with the problems of the central Indian Government, defence, finance, and the safeguards.

My suggestion is that the British Government declare its intention of leaving the representation of the minority communities *in statu quo ante*, as a provisional arrangement operative only till the parties agree upon something different. Separate electorates would remain, and reservation of seats would remain, to the extent and in the proportions in which they exist at present, pending the agreed settlement.

There is a tabular statement on page 189 of the first volume of the Simon Report, which shows how this principle would work out for Mohammedans. The percentage of this community to total members, in seats filled by election from Indian general "communal" constituencies, would be 50 in the Punjab and 46 in Bengal, and the percentage of British Indian Mohammedans in similar British Indian seats in the Central Legislative Assembly would be 38. Nowhere would any community be secured in a statutory majority under the application of this provisional plan: and the Sikhs of the Punjab would receive not less than they have at present, though less than they claim, until they can come to an agreement with the other communities for more.

Against this provisional settlement it is a plausible argument that conditions have changed, and that the elimination of the official *bloc* from the Provincial Councils and the extension of self-governing powers have made the question of communal proportions more important than under the dyarchical constitution. But the change is one of degree; the result is inseparable from any extension of self-governing institutions, and a distribution in which people have till recently acquiesced (whether with complete satisfaction or no) is, as a provisional arrangement, more likely to secure acquiescence than something, however ingenious and however equitable in the eyes of those who have planned it, imposed as a novelty from outside.—Yours, etc.,

18, Gilston Road,
London, S.W.10. JOHN MAYNARD.

THE FUTURE OF THE LABOUR PARTY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—H. G. Wood states that Labour has not been able to make up its mind whether to prevent or promote a breakdown of the present order.

This statement is surely untrue. Labour, through all its responsible leaders, has stated emphatically that it is in favour of evolutionary methods of reconstruction carried out with the least possible dislocation of the existing order. It is true that a very small section of the Labour Party has suggested wild revolutionary proposals, but these have always been turned down by enormous majorities.

H. G. Wood further says that Labour was hopelessly confused as to whether we should stand together and act together as a people to maintain British credit, and ensure national solvency. The Labour Party was always in favour of balancing the Budget and went as far as it could in meeting the views of the Conservatives and Liberals as to cuts in services, etc., but drew the line at the 10 per cent. cut in unemployment allowances, which latter was not due to the action of the T.U.C. The Labour Party knew that this was the beginning of a cut in wages and said, and quite rightly, that it was not just that the rentier should get away with an increase of 30 to 40 per cent. in the value of the pound during the last five years and that Labour should have to pay that extra amount by further cuts in wages. They knew that these cuts would have the effect of still further deflating the pound and still further adding to the burden of interest charges and to the income and capital of the wealthier portion of the community. Having, fortunately, gone off the gold standard, these expected results will not happen.

The so-called National Party succeeded in putting the reasons for the crisis on to the acts of the Labour Party, but everyone with a real knowledge of the facts knows perfectly well that the real reason rests with the international situation and the main blame rests with the bankers and financial interests generally, who considered that their main duty was to preserve the value of the pound and that deflation was sound finance. With this idea in mind, they viewed with complacency the increase in the value of the pound of some 30 per cent. to 40 per cent. during the past few years and took no effective steps to prevent it.

This enormous deflation has increased the burden of war debts, internal and external, and of reparations, and reduced the value received by producers of nearly all raw materials, such as wheat, cotton, rubber, etc., and has been one of the main causes of the present financial crisis.—Yours, etc.,

40, Weoley Park Road,
Selly Oak, Birmingham. HARRISON BARROW.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—We noted in your correspondence columns several letters referring to the apostasy of Mr. MacDonald and the National Labour Party. To our mind this illustrates only too well the sentimental detachment of the Labour Party from any reasoned perspective of the interests of both this country and the world, and its lamentable failure to grasp the service which the Labour Party should be giving this country both in the present crisis and in the near future.

In the world of business the tendency to-day is for the amalgamation of firms into larger and larger units, and this points to "collectivism" instead of indiscriminate, individual, cut-throat competition. The State will have to keep up with this economic and financial "evolution" with a corresponding social "evolution." This is the duty of the Labour Party—to insist that our progress is balanced.

For good or for ill we have a Constitution. It may not be perfect, but it is as near an approach to perfection as the world can show. The Labour Party has violated the principles of our Constitution in two ways:

1. It offers a policy which all the experts agree to be unpractical and undesirable. It is attempting to bribe the nation with promises which it is in no position to fulfil.

2. The Labour Party is controlled by a syndicalist association which, at a generous estimate, represents only one quarter of the electorate.

The Labour Party has a great and glorious future before it if the Party leaders can shake themselves free from their habitual attitude of slip-shod sentimentalism and the pernicious influence of extra-Parliamentary forces, and concentrate on practical "evolutionary" socialism. From this point of view Mr. MacDonald and the National Labour Party are justified in their attidude and, what is more, they are introducing "Socialism" to the natural leaders of our country—the landed and commercial classes—who have never yet failed to respond to the call of their country.

Though "Baldwinites," you see, we have sincere sympathy with the ultimate direction of your views although we fall shy of your present "programme."—Yours, etc.,

Aldenham School, Elstree, Herts. — A. D. DAWKINS. C. BROMLEY.

POLITICS AND RELIGION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It is quite true that the Bishop of London's words, which S.M.G. quotes, are utterly indefensible and will do irreparable damage in alienating sympathy from the Church, if not from religion. There is, unfortunately, much truth also in his taunt that the clergy "champion the comfortable ones of the earth." A terrible indictment against the ordained servants of One who was the friend of publicans and sinners, and had not "where to lay His head."

But is it fair to suppress the fact that there is a large and ever-increasing body of clergy who loathe this despicable state of affairs as much as does your correspondent? Does he know anything of the work and aims of the League of the Kingdom of God, the Industrial Christian Fellowship and other such bodies?

Only the other day I was asked out to lunch by one of the comfortable classes, in order to be reviled and cursed for having preached "that the rich persecute the poor." That is the type of accusation which meets us when we plead for the application of Christian principles to industry and economics.

It does not encourage us to persevere against the bitterness and hatred with which our labours often meet, when we are told that "not one of the clergy has publicly enjoined his flock to study both sides of the question."

By all means let him denounce such unfair and partisan statements as the one he quotes, but he is himself guilty of gross unfairness and partisanship if he suppresses the fact that an increasing body of clergy are themselves doing their utmost to redress the evils of which he complains.—Yours, etc.,

CLERIC.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The Church must be judged by its official standpoint, and not by that of a few individuals, however admirable it may be.

The historical attitude of the Church towards social reform, in the present, as in the long past, is, and has been, such as makes a humane man blush with shame. Is it not amazing that a Church, richly paid to preach an idealistic Gospel with, alleged, divine sanction, should actually support a social system that is an abomination to an agnostic? And, surely, it cannot be wondered at that almost the first act of a people in revolution is to sweep into oblivion the Church which has, everywhere, so shamelessly betrayed them. I hope the courageous and sane line that your paper has lately taken will bring you many thousands of new subscribers.—Yours, etc.,

Lloyds Bank Chambers, Horley, Surrey. — H. H. STOCKDALE ROSS.

CYPRUS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—It would be a great pity if, in the midst of our preoccupation with the economic and financial problem of this country, we should so forget an international question like that of Cyprus as to allow a policy of repression and reaction to be quietly introduced. . . . The Governor has been given "a free hand," the constitution is to be altered to take away such political rights as the population enjoy, and, most stupid act of all, the Christian Greek inhabitants are to foot the bill for the damage done during the revolt, irrespective of whether they took any part in the disturbances or not. Mr. Thomas's colossal ignorance of the whole subject, and particularly the aspirations of the Cypriotes, is of course common knowledge to any student of affairs. During his election campaign at Derby he actually declared that "sinister forces" were at work in Cyprus to disintegrate the British Empire! Sir Ronald Storrs, however, who is a classical scholar, should know, from examples in Greek history, that despotic measures are not likely to cool the ardour of such a people, but on his shoulders rests a good deal of the responsibility for much of the violence which has outraged the feelings of the entire Greek race. The *Times* indulged in a remarkable piece of dissembling in stating: "From the international standpoint there are no grounds for the agitation; from the British point of view its promoters are demanding the surrender of Cyprus to a country which has not asked for it and could not defend the embarrassing gift." Unhappily this nonsense receives some support from the puzzling attitude of M. Venizelos, who, between the devil and the deep sea in his anxiety not to offend the powers, has condemned the uprising. The Greeks of the mainland, however, in unmistakable terms, have shown what they think of the matter, and, in spite of the Greek Premier's statement that "there is no dispute between Greece and Britain," it is unchallengeable that Greeks everywhere desire the return, not only of Cyprus, but the Dodecanese Islands to Greece. The *Manchester Guardian* has truly hit the nail on the head by saying that there is no Crown colony in which the moral case for British occupation is weaker. Four-fifths of the people are Greek, and if the Cypriotes are so fortunate as to have a plebiscite taken under the League of Nations the result is a foregone conclusion.—Yours, etc.,

22 Hollin Park Terrace, Leeds. — TOM ANTHEM.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In your issue of the 31st ultimo are some comments by "Critic" on the troubles in Cyprus, in which he censures the British administration of the island. The fact is that all peoples under foreign rule wish to be independent, or united to their mother country, if they have one (I believe Gibraltar to be the only exception). The reason why we have had to face anti-British manifestations in Ireland, India, Burmah, Egypt, etc., and now Cyprus, is because our methods of government permit the necessary preliminary agitation to begin. Our political principles compel us to allow everywhere liberty of speech and of the press, and free criticism of one's rulers. The consequences are those we know. The French in North Africa and in Tonking, the Italians in Tripoli and in the Tyrol, the Dutch in the East Indies have no such troubles because they crush them *ab initio*. It does not follow that their rule is not otherwise well-intentioned and even beneficent; but if a counterpart to Gandhi were to so much as open his mouth in Algeria he would very quickly find himself in Cayenne. If Italy ruled Rhodes with the liberality which which we rule Cyprus, the island would soon be in full insurrection. Byron's noble lines about Freedom's battle being ever won when once begun are true. But the crux of the matter is in the words "once begun."—Yours, etc.,

November 5th. — C. R.

A TWO-YEAR PLAN FOR AGRICULTURE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Every statement in the article by S.L.B. should be capable of exact scientific verification, and his plan should be put into operation at once. Unfortunately the most important sentence in the article is so expressed as to be almost meaningless, if it is read strictly according to its literal sense. S.L.B. says:

> The farmer, given suitable land with modern machinery, can produce wheat with profit, at two pounds per quarter, and at that price the loaf for which you pay threepence-farthing to-day could be sold at twopence-halfpenny over the counter.

I assume S.L.B. does not mean that someone is to give the farmer the required land and machinery and that an economic rent for the former, and interest and amortisation on the capital cost of the latter, have been allowed for in his computation of profit. Is

this so? S.L.B. should state (*a*) what is meant by "suitable land," (*b*) the minimum acreage, (*c*) the cost of the machinery to work that minimum acreage, and (*d*) the approximate area of "suitable land" available for the plan over the whole of England and Wales.—Yours, etc.,

Amberley House, Norfolk Street, W.C.2. F. GRAHAM MAW.

THE TRADE BALANCE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am greatly puzzled by the continuing talk in authoritative quarters of our "adverse balance of trade."

Immediately Great Britain went off the gold standard, Sir William Beveridge wrote in the *News Chronicle* as follows:

> The whole case for a tariff to redress the balance of trade is gone. As soon as a country is off the gold standard the balance of exports and imports gets adjusted rapidly and automatically by the exchanges. If more sterling is offered on the exchange market than is asked for, as will happen if imports are too high for exports, the value of sterling in other currencies, no longer sustained by gold, must sink; imports are rapidly made dearer and exports cheaper, and equilibrium of the trade balance comes automatically.

This seems perfectly clear and sensible. I can understand that the Government might still wish to restrict imports in order to prevent the value of sterling in other currencies from falling too low; but I cannot understand the assertion that we still suffer from an adverse balance of trade.

Will someone kindly explain?—Yours, etc.,

PENGUIN.

ETON AND WESTMINSTER

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—May we take the liberty of amending one of the figures quoted by Professor Laski in his interesting analysis of the new Parliament. He estimates the probable number of seats held by Old Etonians at forty. These are, in point of fact, one hundred and four.—Yours, etc.,

L. G. B. BRETT.
J. M. A. RIDLEY.
(Editors: *Eton College Chronicle.*)

ELECTORAL METHODS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—As one impartial in politics, or at any rate a man of the centre—an Independent Liberal, perhaps—I should like to have chapter and verse for the statements of two of your correspondents (Dr. Norman Leys and "A Labour Candidate's Wife") in your issue of November 7th, 1931, to the effect that slips were put in pay envelopes intimating that if the Labour Party won the election the works would be closed down.

Dr. Leys even says that these tactics were adopted by many employers all over the country. Can we have names and addresses?

Were any of these slips reproduced photographically in the Labour press or on posters? If not, why not? Would this not have provided convincing evidence of the alleged unfair methods of the National Party? Surely it is important that such tactics should be exposed in detail?

But, of course, this election was fought unfairly. Every election is. It was, for instance, very unfair of Labour propagandists to compare, in terms of percentages, the cut in unemployment insurance with the increased income tax borne by the middle class, as if this were the only burden laid upon the more or less well-to-do. Everybody knows that they had already suffered heavily from widespread reductions in salaries and dividends, over and above calamitous capital depreciation. And in the case of this class capital largely represents savings from personal earnings.—Yours, etc.,

Springfield, Kew Gardens, Surrey. H. W. YOXALL.

FRONT DE BŒUF

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I noticed a slight error which your reviewer had made in his review of Colonel King's *The Knights Hospitallers in the Holy Land.*

Reginald Front de Bœuf was not a Knight Hospitaller, he was the son of a lesser Norman baron brutalised by Saxon plunder. The only Knight Hospitaller mentioned in *Ivanhoe* is Ralph de Lipont, the weakest of the challengers, in the Passage of Arms at Ashby.

It is a slight mistake which would not be worth notice in any other paper. But seeing that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION claims complete omniscience in every direction, political, financial and literary, it occurred to me that correction might be welcome.—Yours, etc.,

Ditchingham Hall, Norfolk. MARGARET F. CARR.

[Very welcome.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

SELF-ADVERTISEMENT

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—While the B.B.C. last night was making the ether ring with the Government slogans: *Buy British, Down with International Trade, Birmingham Bananas are Best*, and so on, I was reminded of the ribald amusement with which certain foreign friends of mine received English envelopes stamped with these devices under the last Conservative Government. No envelope could then go its way without some public and authoritative proof that, though we might not be good at growing or manufacturing things, we were at least splendidly zealous in boosting them; and I suppose we are now in for another similar campaign.

These thoughts made me turn to an envelope I had just received from France, stamped with some slogan or other, which I had not read. I enclose it for your inspection. It runs: "Les Animaux souffrent comme vous. Pitié pour eux." Really, I sometimes almost wish I was a Frenchman!—Yours, etc.,

Yatscombe, Boars Hill, Oxford. GILBERT MURRAY.

BOLSHEVISM AND THE *DAILY MIRROR*

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your correspondent's explanation of the *Daily Mirror's* mad Bolshevism picture is surely rather recondite. In A. Rhys Williams' *Through the Russian Revolution* (1921)—written by a colleague of John Reed's, an American Communist—the photograph appears with the caption: "Escaping the bullets in the July uprising by lying flat on the pavement. This picture is a hardy perennial. Any disturbance in Russia is liable to bring it forth again as the authentic photograph of the event." But of course the public's memory . . .—Yours, etc.,

St. Catharine's College, Cambridge. O. H. K. SPATE.

[Quite so. But why "recondite"? "Critic" gave the authentic origin of this hardy perennial on the evidence of an eye witness.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

THE COUNT

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am much interested in your contributor's description of this event, but am not a little astonished at some of the details she gives, for they appear to me to indicate a lack of care in the arrangements.

It is a good many years since I acted as counter and scrutineer in two elections in the North, but on both these occasions all the ballot boxes were opened together and their contents turned into a kind of enclosure in the middle of the hall so that it was quite impossible for anyone, either counter or scrutineer, to have the faintest idea as to the district from which any batch of votes they were counting might have come. This precaution, it appears to me, is even more important now with universal suffrage than it could have been thirty years ago.

Your contributor gives the instance of the box from "Barton's End," where they leaned over the shoulders of the tellers to see how the votes were cast. I am very sure no one was allowed to lean over our shouldres at either of those counts to which I refer, and no one but the officials was allowed even to approach the tables.—Yours, etc.,

The Knowles, Hempstead Road, Watford, Herts. M. J. E. TILNEY.

Miscellany

THE PACE OF MR. MUNRO

THE Stage Society has begun its work again, and on Sunday night the audience showed they were glad it had never put up its shutters. The play, *Bluestone Quarry*, did not prove to be one of Mr. Munro's best; it is far from being as good as *At Mrs. Beam's* or *The Rumour*. Nevertheless, it has one very well-drawn character in it and interesting ideas and situations. This character, Tars Rafaële, was subtly and vigorously interpreted by Mr. Michael Sherbrooke. The opening of the play is too slow. Mr. Munro has great gifts as a playwright, but he lacks a necessary one if his gifts are to be appreciated at their proper value to-day: pace. Our minds do not work better—but faster—than they did. Mr. Munro's methods are thorough—and slow. That would not have mattered twenty years ago; but to-day the dramatist, if he cannot use the short-hand of incident from the rise of the curtain, must hint and hurry. You can see this change of pace in successful fiction; you can see it in successful plays. The "movies" and "talkies" seldom contain points worth taking, but they have taught people to seize them quickly. No doubt this puts a premium on superficiality; but also on lean, swift dialogue. In Act I Mr. Munro has to convey the following facts: that we find ourselves in a distant country which has recently passed from primitive agricultural conditions, in which the inhabitants were equals and men addressed each other as "brother," into modern industrialism, with its attendant competition, poverty and discontent; that of two brothers, attracted from pastoral life to the rich bluestone quarries, the elder hopes to rise above his fellow-workers, thanks to his own brains and resolution, and the other brother to capture the new wealth for his fellow-workers; that the quarries are controlled by a harsh determined man, whose "labour difficulties" are increased by having to reduce wages in order to compete with a new cheap synthetic product in the world-market; that this man, Lennox, has an attractive daughter. I think that is all the dramatist has to suggest before, or rather while, proceeding to action. Lennox offers Tars full control of the workers, if he will only get them to agree to a reduction of wages. And Tars jumps at it. A meeting takes place between Lennox's daughter, Vanda, and the young communist Malion, who enters flushed with his success in urging the workers to strike; and Tars, who is, of course, bent on disuniting them, refuses to join his brother. A magnetic spark flies between Vanda and Malion, igniting in the youth a more vivid faith in his ideal, and the girl, consciousness of her power. There! Now we are off. The ground is prepared for the theme and the conflict. But it has taken an hour and a quarter.

The theme of the play is two-fold: Labour's weakness in its struggle for power, and the curse inherent in industrial civilisation. The dramatic interest lies in the conflict between these two brothers, both representative types, and bound close together in affection. The elder brother embodies the determination to save self first and open the road to workers who have the resolution and ability to follow his example; the younger, the determination to pool abilities and opportunities and only to strive for what can be shared by all. Malion stands for the equality and brotherhood of man; Tars (granted that poison of competition has once been injected into the masses) upholds the right of the stronger to dominate in a struggle which exists between workers as well as between Labour and Capital. It is important to note that proviso. Tars says in effect that his brother's ideal is moonshine—only practicable in a civilisation where no man can get power; that it is not even recognised by the most down-trodden of wage-slaves the moment such a one sees a chance of climbing above his fellow-workers. He does not believe in the solidarity of Labour. Events prove him right. In the best scene in the play (Scene 2, Act II), Tars succeeds in cajoling the strike-leaders by flattering them and offering them special privileges (bribes on a smaller scale such as he has accepted himself). Only his brother holds out against him. Malion resolves (inspired by one more meeting with Vanda, who "cares for none of these things"), to go back to the mountains and return with the mountaineers at his back to win the quarries for the wage-slaves in spite of themselves, and to kill Lennox at the sacrifice of his own life. He does return, but Vanda, in whom he had confided, has warned her father. So he kills her instead. He is saved from Lennox's revolver by his brother's knife; Tars stabs Lennox just in time; from the dead manager's hand Dixon takes a crumpled telegram and reads it: the price of synthetic "bluestone" stands at a still lower figure, one with which the quarries cannot possibly compete. So industrialism in Renovia was doomed from the first. All Lennox's efforts to sweat native labour down to profit-point, all his willingness to risk assassination to save the business, were vain. Renovia will go back to its primitive state in which no man will want to be superior in wealth or importance to his neighbour—because it is not possible to be so.

From this brief summary it will be seen that here is a play with emotional tension in it which has some significance beyond the fate of the persons concerned. The representative relation of the two brothers is also complicated by jealousy on the part of Tars. He resents the power of Vanda, and attributes Malion's obstinacy to her influence; he knows her for the empty little vessel she is and wants to marry her himself on those terms. He would have doubtless succeeded had not the crash come. I have complained that the play moves too slowly; let me justify that. Mr. Munro is an adept at speeches. Tars's address to the strike committee is first rate; Malion makes the same harangue twice (a mistake). He tells us what he is *going* to say to the workers and what he *did* say. His speeches are not good. It is difficult to avoid making an idealist into a noble ass; the safest way is to make him speak as little as possible. Then, too much time is wasted over Dixon. He performs the function of underlining the points; through disillusionment he has gone back to faith in the primitive. It is Mr. Munro's fault as a dramatist to underline too much. Vanda herself is a failure; we are allowed to see "the very pulse of the machine" whenever she opens her mouth; consequently she does not live as a human being. The defects of *Bluestone Quarry* are as obvious as its merits, but it is certainly a play which a society like the Stage Society should have performed.

DESMOND MACCARTHY.

VALLOMBROSA

IT is irritating to repress a cliché throughout the length of an article. Gallery-cards have fluttered into the letter-box with such frequency since the beginning of the month that "thick as autumn leaves" is irresistible. Everybody hopes for a boom after an election, and the artist has as much right to share in it as anyone else. After all, a good picture, quite apart from its frame, is a gilt-edged security. But just now, like the National Party, the galleries have almost overdone it. Not only have an exceptional number of interesting exhibitions opened, but there are four one-man shows which simply must not be missed.

At the London Artists' Association, Mr. William Roberts comes into his own. For a long time he has been quietly perfecting his particular convention. He has now entirely humanised what with common consent might be called his cubism. He is, indeed, the only English painter for whom that movement has been a means of development instead of a blind alley. And now his method no longer

obtrudes itself upon the picture, but is merely the appropriate point of departure upon which to construct a work pictorially delightful as regards form and colour, while at the same time rich in contemporary significance. Mr. Roberts is as modern as anyone could demand, but he is also in the tradition of Hogarth and Rowlandson. He sees, and his observation is without illusions. The people taking their ease in the park, or exerting themselves in games and exercise, are his chief subject. But he ignores its obvious sentimental pitfalls, exhibiting candidly the awkward limbs, heavy hands and leering eyes. There is no veiling of actuality, yet beauty floods into the picture from Mr. Roberts's colour and design, whether in the firmly controlled *Les Routiers* or the kaleidoscopic *Primrose Hill*. He will be a leader of English painting in the Nineteen-Thirties.

Mr. Henry Lamb's exhibition at the Leicester Galleries is a much more important affair than his last one. We may regret in him, as in Mr. Duncan Grant, a sacrifice of imagination to science, a change from lyric fantasy to bleaker realism; but Mr. Lamb has progressed from a rather arid phase of acceptance of face-values at the expense of the picturesque to something approaching an individual grand manner. The portraits have impressive dignity as well as subtle characterisation; *The Painter and His Wife* is a real lesson, without pedantry, in composition, and *Mr. and Mrs. Bryan Guinness and Son* is a splendid conception, splendidly carried out, its stately manner relieved by its vitality. And the landscapes, from the grave Irish scenes to the more limpid English ones, such as *The Lock* or the triumphant sweep of *Bridge near Salisbury*, have a tang of the air and the soil which imply a much-increased receptivity of his subject on Mr. Lamb's part. They are gracious, sensitive pictures, persuading appreciation a great deal more readily than the artist's previous objective and ascetic attitude.

Mr. Frank Dobson's water-colours of the South of France at Messrs. Tooth's gallery show the same swift response of a true artist to characteristics of form and beauty in landscape. Here is the real silvery grey-green of Provence, the sparkling warmth or the quick shiver of the mistral, just the right fan-shape of the olive and arabesque of the vine. Mr. Dobson catches the mood of his scene in a manner that can only be instinctive, but to the handling of the water-colour medium he gives a definiteness and permanence which satisfy Rossetti's demand for fundamental brainwork. Fine modelling and admirable poise are evident, as was to be expected, in the sculpturesque portrait heads, and the bronzes and terra-cottas which are also shown are entirely worthy of Mr. Dobson's reputation.

At the Redfern Gallery, Mr. R. O. Dunlop makes a further advance in a career of rapid success. He works with his pallet-knife as vigorously as ever, but a tendency towards a certain juiciness of effect is now less obtrusive, and the structure of his composition no longer has an aptitude to fall suddenly to pieces. There is a majesty about such portraits as *Repose* and *Exaltation*. His landscapes have avoided a previous tendency to murkiness, and, as with *Low Tide, Guernsey* and *Street in Amsterdam*, are now luminous and a-pulse with life.

Another notable event is the rejuvenescence of the New English Art Club, at the New Burlington Galleries. This year it has done the work neglected by its junior, the London Group. Gone are the pastiches of the Italians and the Norwich School, almost gone the pre-Raphaelite nightgowns. Instead there is youth and experiment, successful enough in Mr. Carr's *The Rose and Crown*, whose realism conforms to a well-regulated harmony of tone; Mr. Robinson's gay *Gigantic Amusements at Hampstead*, Mr. Utin's *Slade-Men's Room*, Mr. Darwin's *A. F. Norman-Butler, Esq.*, and a good many others. Sir Charles Holmes, Messrs. Thornton, Nevinson, Charlton, Cundall and the other senior members of the society all reach the standard one demands of them, while Mr. Lucien Pissarro's two landscapes deserve especial attention. The New English is once more worthy of its name.

Other galleries offer less important but interesting shows. At the Lefevre Galleries, along with Mr. Staite Murray's rather lack-lustre pottery, Miss Frances Hodgkins has some remarkable still-lifes set in landscape which triumphantly challenge comparison with much modern French work that receives more attention. At the Warren Gallery, Miss Mary Hogarth shows exquisite colour-washed sketches of Greece; vivid realisations of scene altogether different from the usual travel-reminiscence kind of sketch. Mr. Anthony Brown, in his paintings of the Gold Coast, at the Bloomsbury Gallery, also moulds travel-impressions into genuine art. He gives his own imprint to an exotic scene and displays admirable sense of design in his African flower-painting. At the Leger Gallery, Mr. Plessy's autumnal glades and profuse still-lifes have fine glow and a pleasant richness. There are landscapes by the late Mr. Christopher Wood at the Wertheim Galleries which ought to be seen. The Curtis Moffat Gallery shows a particularly good series of contemporary work, with two splendid Thames pictures by Miss Eve Kirk, an excellent landscape, *Hythe*, by Mr. Daintrey, one of Mr. Sickert's best Dieppe pictures, and an exalting, airy *Paris-Plage* by the late Mr. Fred Mayor. The galleries this month may echo the "Buy British" slogan with confidence.

T. W. EARP.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Othello"

THERE was a tendency in the Cosmopolitan Theatre production of *Othello* to treat the whole play as a subtle but conventional melodrama. It would have been senseless to push it too far, but Mr. Edmund Willard's Othello lent colour to the scheme. He made no attempt to dispense with melodramatic gestures, though he restrained his voice; but as the idea was not exploited by the producer his performance lost force, and indeed at times seemed miserably lacking in understanding and variety. This Othello of melodrama was too often coloured with the sententiousness of the wronged husband rather than with the pathos of the too-credulous fool, who was not all a fool. He played *at* Miss Lydia Sherwood rather than with her, which was the greater pity, because her Desdemona was a perfectly conceived and consistent piece of acting. Mr. Gerald Cooper's Iago was arresting. He may lack experience of the stage, but he did not fall into that all-too-usual blunder of suggesting extraneous motives for Iago's villainy. The rest of the cast were no mere background, and Mr. George Skillan was a distinguished Cassio.

"Lady-in-Waiting"

As the curtain fell on Act II of *Lady-in-Waiting*, at the St. Martin's Theatre, I decided that the situation now called for the intervention of either Dr. Freud or the fairies, if we were to get home by midnight. Nobody could object to a young lady pretending for the sake of publicity to be the mistress of a king she had never met. But when she began to look yearningly at the palace from her chamber window, dropping tears, and quoting the imaginary fate of Viola's imaginary sister in *Twelfth Night*, one felt the stirrings of an outraged propriety. The fairies, of course, had it. The dreams which might have been analysed were sweetly realised. She met her handsome king, told him all, and in ten minutes was being whirled off into the forest to be duly made a dishonest woman, to the relief of her friends and relations, who had traded briskly on her hitherto fictitious downfall. The Puritanian atmosphere combined with the steadily mounting tide of Romance to swamp whatever satirical implications the author may have intended to convey, and the characterisation is so broadly incredible that

for a whole act I imagined that I was watching a grossly mishandled farce. Miss Leonora Corbett has potentialities which might show to better advantage in a better play. Most of the other performances seemed hastily showy, but Mr. Aubrey Mather infused sufficient Dickensian ardour into Lili's father to make him genuinely entertaining.

"Make Up Your Mind"

Make Up Your Mind at the Criterion is a fantastic and very entertaining play. The Pages are "a typical (stage) middle-class family," consisting of a nearly doddering, pleasant father; a daughter (stage-struck) and a son (ranch-struck)—both as ill-conditioned and generally detestable young people as such genial old men always have the misfortune to produce, in plays; and their young, pretty and elegant stepmother, Caroline. Into their conventional midst bursts Balthazar McConochie, as eccentric a millionaire as any we have met of a notoriously eccentric tribe, and turns their neatly ordered lives topsy-turvy in a couple of days, by commanding them to make up their minds, or rather, for he is not a man to leave such a task to incompetent subordinates, by making up their minds for them. The father sells his property and starts speculating; Caroline, "virtuous by force of habit," is induced to accept a pasty but persistent aesthete for a lover; the daughter is to go on the stage, and the son to leave the next day to punch cows on the Pampas. And then comes a rumour that McConochie is mad—a suspicion of which might already have crossed the minds of a less-confiding family. This gives the author a chance of an extremely funny scene in which the Pages try to behave as usual to McConochie while awaiting the arrival from London of a male nurse; a chance of which both he and the actors make the most. The whole cast, especially Mr. Reginald Gardiner as the lover and Mr. Baliol Holloway as the millionaire, is to be congratulated upon keeping within the bounds of possibility what might easily have become farcically absurd.

Naval Tragedy

British International Films are to be congratulated on the dignity with which, in their film *Men Like These* at the Regal, they have reconstructed the heroic tragedy of the *Poseidon*. On the whole this story was allowed to make its own effect, without underlining by the management. One could have been spared advantageously a little poetry and some insistence on the world mission of the British Navy, a tiresome form of propaganda nowadays, and irrelevant to the story under review. These, however, are small matters. Mr. Walter Summers, in many ways the most gifted of English directors, has made a beautiful sequence out of the *Poseidon's* ill-fated journey, and shown much sensibility in his treatment of the submarine's delicate machinery. The story itself is well and clearly told till the agony and beauty of the episode becomes almost unbearable. Perhaps Mr. Summers made a slight error in sticking too closely to truth. I could have dispensed with some of the comic relief by which the crew kept up their spirit in the doomed ship. No doubt this was psychologically correct, but it was at the same time distressing in rather too direct a manner. Two Chinese servants in the crew behave with a courage equal to that of the English, thus arousing the astonishment of the crew, and perhaps of the audience. This, no doubt, was again in character. But as it is notorious that Chinese are, if possible, even braver than the British, it might have been as well to omit some of this particular feature. Still, Mr. Summers has told a story of great delicacy with the minimum of sentimentality, which, considering the innumerable opportunities for bad taste, is a remarkable achievement.

Purcell at Sadler's Wells

Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* was given its first performance at Sadler's Wells last week. It is incredible that so fine an opera should not long ago have become part of the programme of every English opera company. The B.B.C. have done a great deal lately to popularise Purcell, and the performance at Sadler's Wells, which will be repeated at the Old Vic. on Nov. 13th and 14th, gives people the chance of appreciating the range and vitality of his operatic music. Mr. Edward Dent's edition of the play has been followed, and dramatically the scenes may appear a trifle abrupt, but the music completely transforms them. The close of the opera, Dido's last song and the dirge of the chorus, is a magnificent piece of writing with a simple grandeur which raises the tableau of Aeneas's parting from Dido to tragedy. The performance at Sadler's Wells was musically satisfying, and there was no attempt to formalise the actions of the singers or make a pose of antiquity. I thought the sailors' dance in the last scene had a trace too much of the modern ragdoll ballet. A small orchestra under Mr. Constant Lambert played vigorously and well, and Miss Joan Cross as Dido was impressive. *Dido and Aeneas* was followed by Gretry's ballet *Cephalus and Procris*, in which Lydia Lopokova made one of her rare appearances and danced with as much charm and glee as ever.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Saturday, November 14th—
Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.
Orloff, Piano Recital, Grotrian Hall, 3.15.
Payling Concert, Albert Hall, 8.

Sunday, November 15th—
S. K. Ratcliffe on "Equality: Do We Wish It?" Conway Hall, 11.
Paderewski, Albert Hall, 3.
"Musical Chairs," by Ronald Mackenzie, Arts Theatre.

Monday, November 16th—
Courtauld-Sargent Concert, London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Stravinsky, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
"Monsieur Beaucaire," by Booth Tarkington, Daly's Theatre.

Tuesday, November 17th—
Miss Mary Chamot on "French Art," Victoria and Albert Museum, 3.
Dr. Percy Dearmer on "English Decorated Gothic," King's College, 5.30.
Mrs. Oliver Strachey on "Dame Millicent Fawcett," Morley College, 8.
"The Red Light," by H. F. Maltby and J. Trevor, New Theatre.

Wednesday, November 18th—
B.B.C. Symphony Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
"Little Catherine," by Alfred Savoir, Phœnix Theatre.
Mrs. E. M. Lowe on "The School Child," Caxton Hall, 8.30.

Thursday, November 19th—
Royal Philharmonic, Bach Programme, Queen's Hall.
J. L. Gray on "Karl Marx and the Communists," King's College, 5.15.
Professor H. J. Laski on "The American Collapse," Kingsway Hall, 8.30.
C. Le Fleming, Piano Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.30.

Friday, November 20th—
A. F. Kendrick on "The Decorative Arts in France," British Academy, Burlington Gardens, 5.
Professor Oliver Elton on "The Poetry of Walter Scott," Birkbeck College, 5.30.
Isobel Lamond, Song Recital, Wigmore Hall, 5.30.
Sir William Rothenstein on "Whither Painting," B.B.C., 9.20.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

I HAVE always had a corner in my library for what I call greedy books. To like these volumes, to read and reread them is an idiosyncrasy that I find it quite impossible to defend; but those of my friends who share it insist that no defence is needed. I can see it is an odd habit to collect with an eager appetite cookery books with recipes one will never try, and devotional books about great wines which one will never drink. The enjoyment of books about food, about cooking, about wines is similar to the enjoyment of books about adventures. It is comfortably exciting to go to the South Pole or to scale Mount Everest with one's idle and undisciplined carcase cosily in an armchair; and so, sadly ruminating over one's last dalliance with a shaken bottle of fortified Soho Chianti, one reads breathlessly about the adventures among masterpieces of such gallant oinophilists as Dr. Saintsbury, Mr. Warner Allen, Mr. Morton Shand or Sir Francis Colchester Wemyss, whose *The Pleasures of the Table* (Nisbet, 6s.) is a worthy addition to the English literature of gastronomy. One pleasure in reading gastronomical books once belonged to the perusal of theology, and now is attached to the study of economic books and books on the physical sciences—it is the pleasure of the heresy-hunt. For we who have but a tittle of experience to put beside that of the great gastronomes, are the keener in the ardent detection of lapses from true doctrine, and will not fail to challange the Masters, even as licensed curates will bait embattled bishops or securely entrenched deans. I can find little of positive heresy in Sir Francis' volume. He is sound about the cocktail. He is sound about champagne. Whiskey is not in his index. He is classical about afternoon tea. He errs when he writes—

> It is a pity to put a wine of any quality with fish, which seems to kill any wine—so if you must drink anything with fish make it a light dry white wine of some kind.

There are sherries which can be drunk with almost any fish, even mackerel; but the error in his sentence lies in this sweeping use of the word "fish." Many of the more delicate fish, trout for instance, demand a good wine; and a fine Chablis is as natural to John Dory as it is esteemed to be to oysters. On the cooking of vegetables Sir Francis gives excellent advice, and is firm on the need of steaming instead of boiling. It is because of our disgraceful boiling habits that the English cabbage is so often found to have lost his heart. Sir Francis is perhaps rather too lenient to modern taste in his chapter on sweets. I am sorry to find him giving a recipe for constructing that nauseating device known as Pêche Melba, a food that was surely a schoolgirl's nightmare after her first reading of Elinor Glyn. Against one modernity (it was originally, I believe, a Russian habit justified by the hour-long waits between courses) Sir Francis writes with just severity.

> One sometimes has the sad experience of finding that a guest—almost always a female—demands to smoke between the courses—or does so without asking permission. It is a horrible and disgusting habit, and decent food and wine are utterly wasted on such people. At the time one can only sit and suffer and resolve to put the names of such barbarians on one's black list, and so be safe from them in the future. Smoking may be a pleasure, but it is not one of the Pleasures of the Table.

He must have suffered before he penned "Female."

* * *

I have four other books for the greedy corner: Miss Henniker-Heaton's *Dinner with James* (Matthews and Marrot, 6s.); Mr. Norman Davey's *The Hungry Traveller in France* (Cape, 10s. 6d.); *Food for the Gods* (Grant Richards, 7s. 6d.) by "Lucullus"; and Mr. Warner Allen's *The Romance of Wine* (Benn, 21s.). "Lucullus" who is a lady, has written a book of recipes, with no intervening philosophy and no social comment; her businesslike brevity will appeal to some, but will hardly satisfy him who wishes more conversation with his meals. She has some amusing salads and sweets; but some of the recommended savouries are merely whimsical ways of wasting food—as "Pigs in Blankets," which is an oyster rolled up inside a piece of bacon, or sardines with lighted gin on them. This is not cooking. Miss Henniker-Heaton's book is at the opposite extreme to "Lucullus'"; and contains far too much light talk to be ranked as a proper gastronomical work. The light talk is of the best, as one would expect from the author of *The Perfect Hostess*; but we weary rather both of James and the frequently intolerably bright lady who cooks his Sunday meals for him. Still I found something very appealing in Verona's attack of influenza in the Hotel de l'Aube et de l'Orient, and was charmed that there, too, they surround the patient with the strong, industrious smell of onions to help him through that most tiresome of fevers. (The cure for influenza is a salt-starve for a day, and to keep onions in your bedroom.) Miss Henniker-Heaton has something of Mr. E. V. Lucas's smooth, consequent flow; she is never at a loss for a subject, and if it is an awkward one she can work it in neatly—an invaluable talent in a cook, who should be able to use anything.

* * *

Mr. Norman Davey's book is a most attractive mixture of geography, gastronomy, good writing, and sound knowledge of France. There are, of course, other English authors who know and praise France, notably Mr. Sisley Huddleston and Mr. Stephen Gwynn; but Mr. Norman Davey brings good support to them, and his approach to a due appreciation of our neighbour is through a different door. He walks in by the kitchen, and how fine a kitchen it is, by the wine-cellar, and what other cellars can compare with it? He has an enviable mobility, which makes his book so valuable. He knows Haute Savoie as well as the Somme, the Loire as well as Calvados, Seine-et-Oise as well as Lot-et-Garonne. So if there be any pilgrims who must go to France, here is a guide which will lead them to a good inn; and for those of us who have to stay in England, wondering a little dismally when the wine-trade with France will be denounced as dumping, how pleasant at least to read of what we cannot have. Mr. Davey is a generous author. He keeps back no secrets, but tells us heartily and with an anxious desire to satisfy where he has found the best things to eat and to drink. He is a man who takes gastronomy seriously; for he pursued his art during the war; and when sent to unlikely and uncongenial places occasionally found surprises in the cellar.

* * *

And so to Mr. Warner Allen. He is one of the greatest writers on wine. A book such as this should be read by all those who permit themselves to speak or write about "alcohol." To ask a man, in the vile jargon, "Do you use alcohol?" is as stupid as to say to a meat-eater "Can you tolerate protein?" or to almost anyone except a professional starving-man "Do you really think vitamins agree with you?" There have, of course, been evil ministers of wine. Mr. Warner Allen tells dreadful stories of vile concoeters, domiciled at Cette, who ran manufactories of wines of all countries. Rascals such as these have injured the god Dionysus, and scandalised the wine-drinkers. Against them and this vile pandering to Silenus must be placed such a book as this, full of curious lore about the ancient wines of Italy, written by one who never forgets that wine is more important than vintage wines, and can praise the modest wines who have no strength or heart to travel, like the wines of Monte Venere or Monte Albano. This is a book worthy to go with Dr. Saintsbury's *Cellar-book* and Mr. Allen's own *Wines of France*. There is a touching entry in the index—"Cellar, an American,"—just that, and then no page number. An accident, of course, but as the art-critics say, how significant!

RICHARD SUNNE.

NEW NOVELS

The Mother. By NAOMI ROYDE-SMITH. Gollancz. 6s.
Uncle Stephen. By FORREST REID. Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d.
The Youth of Jacob Ackner. By ADELAIDE PHILLPOTTS. Benn. 7s. 6d.
Rumour at Nightfall. By GRAHAM GREENE. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.
The Sons of Mrs. Aab. By SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.
Dusty Death. By CLIFTON ROBBINS. Benn. 7s. 6d.
The Red King Dreams. By C. G. CRUMP. Faber and Faber. 8s. 6d.

At a time when the craze for enormous novels is at its height; when the production of half-a-million words by Mr. So-and-So inflames Mr. Somebody Else with the high resolve to go one better by achieving six hundred thousand; when the day fast approaches that will see our weekly novel delivered, solitary, in a plain van—at such a time it is refreshing to find an artist of Miss Naomi Royde-Smith's quality offering to her considerable public a novel so scandalously and beautifully brief as *The Mother*. Brevity, indeed, is in itself no more a merit than the prolixity that is nowadays accounted one. But I have yet to read an abnormally long novel that could not have been improved with a pair of scissors (Tolstoy, but not our Victorians, excepted); and it is axiomatic, I think, that any literary fashion is a bad fashion. *The Mother* is a lovely essay in rumination. Mrs. Majendie sits in her garden, where her two little boys are playing, and her inner life, of which they are the chief illumination, is revealed to us in her memories. In unskilful hands no method of narration can prove more tedious than this. It is a method that demands of the author an intimate penetration of his subject, a quick, artistic intuition, and a juggler's effortless dexterity in keeping two billiards balls, the past and the present, moving at different speeds. Miss Royde-Smith's manipulation is a triumph. The composition of the piece, the ebb and flow of reverie, the rhythm of alternation between the brooding heart and the outward scene: these are more than admirable. Miss Royde-Smith—and it is a condition of success in this difficult genre—is master of a sensitive, unrhetorical, delicately cadenced prose-style, which subdues the diverse elements of her subject—drama and memory, tenderness and anger—to a flowing harmony. And what a subject! What pitfalls and possibilities! What morasses of mawkishness and what peaks of poetry! Miss Royde-Smith avoids the morasses and attains the peaks. I could wish indeed that she had spared us "miggle" for "middle," and one or two other reproductions of childish speech; but such lapses, if one may fairly call them so, are trifling and few. The children themselves are very real. The younger, Beng, swallows some cherry-stones; whereupon the elder, Trevor, calmly prepares for his death. He is very busy and untroubled about it, and afterwards, when questioned about this lack of brotherly feeling, he explains himself with charming candour and lucidity: "Of course, I should have missed Beng in a way. But I should have had his grave. I thought it could be in the dogs' and cats' graveyard behind the greenhouse, where we buried the thrush. I thought he could have the black lion for a gravestone, but he said he'd rather the silver frame with your photograph in it from Daddy's study, if Daddy could spare it. Besides, I rather hoped an angel would appear to comfort me." But the book is far from being a collection of pretty anecdotes concerning children. Motherhood, in this mother, is seen for what it is at its best, an art; and the relation between mother and child as something infinitely rich and strange and subtle. Mrs. Majendie was "torn between the desire of all good mothers that her children should have easy manners, be frank without shyness, and her less constant but more frantic impulse to stand between them and such proffered, miscellaneous caresses." And so:

> She looked down at Beng's curly head, bent over his daisies; saw his earnest fingers working on the hairy pink and green stalks of the flowers; felt him, so meek, so lovely in his attention to his task, in his trust in her, that she almost cried aloud her remorse for the gentle rebuke she had given and he had not resented. Why had she not understood him then and there? Why had she not said, "Yes, Beng, her furs *did* have a horrid smell, and she had no business to ask you to kiss her again, and you were quite right"? Why must she be wise and severe with this tender, gentle child, just as those other people, with whom for a moment she had been surrounded once more in memory, had been with her in a hundred little misunderstandings and tiny disasters when she too had perceived and rejected by virtue of a finer sensitiveness than theirs? What were the good manners she forced upon him but hypocrisies coming between him and the unspoiled perceptiveness of his morning eyes? It was impossible to love too much, to have too wide an indulgence, too far-reaching a sympathy with any child. When she looked back with her mind on her own childhood, she believed that it had been happy; but her heart remembered it often clouded with grief and bewilderment and the isolating sense of inexplicable misunderstandings. In this hour, where the records of the past had slipped their veils and were crowding upon her with a vividness greater than that of their vanished actuality, she saw Beng, as she had known herself, not only in the physical resemblance she had caught in his face, but in every motion of his being, every quivering shade of his perceptiveness, every maze to which she had ever lost the clue.

But this does not end the matter. The mother is not only a mother; she is a child. And in the last resort she is herself only, a self unique and solitary, and must learn to live on the resources of her own spirit. Trevor she has yielded to his aunt; Dick (her husband) she has yielded to Trevor; only Beng, the younger boy, has she kept for herself in absolute possession. But in the great spiritual crisis of her life she finds that her renunciations have been as false as her possession of Beng is illusory; for she had compensated herself for them with the pride of virtue and had taken Beng for her rich reward, so that when this reward seems to be snatched away she is utterly overwhelmed with ugliness and her heart fills with loathing of all that she has ever loved. In a moment of time—two chapters of tremendous drama—she descends into hell, comes within an ace of perdition, and rises again on the wings of self-knowledge. This epic drama of the soul, with its agony and exultation, is the true theme of the book. The victory won, she looks up to see husband and sons coming towards her where she sits in the garden. "As they came, she raised her smiling face to greet them and was content to be alone." This is the last word of a powerful and beautiful story. And it is perhaps the last word of wisdom.

Mr. Forrest Reid, in his very different manner, also tells the story of a childhood. *Uncle Stephen* is a book of arresting quality. It has freshness, intimacy, and charm; and its fantasy is the flower of a rare imaginative sensibility. But nephew Tom is a handful for any novelist. Living with a stepmother and step-brothers, he is starved of the warm affection that his nature

ALFRED DÖBLIN'S

ALEXANDERPLATZ

"Demands to be read." Frank Swinnerton in the Evening News. "Deserves an enthusiastic reception." Glasgow Herald. "An amazing book for those who like their literature strong—and for those who have minds broad enough to discern genius when they meet it." Birmingham Gazette.

8s. 6d.

SECKER

craves. He dreams of Uncle Stephen, his dead mother's brother, investing the dream with all the colours of his heart's desire; and eventually he is visited by an apparition and becomes blissfully convinced that he is in mysterious contact with the avuncular benevolence. He discovers where Uncle Stephen lives (which is more than I was able to do) and runs away from his stepmother's house to join him. The meeting is ecstatic, and it is agreed that the boy shall remain with Uncle Stephen for ever. Judged by any but strictly literary standards, Tom's complete emotional absorption in this eccentric old gentleman must be accounted unfortunate, and it is perhaps for that reason that Uncle Stephen wished for him, and by wishing created, a playmate. Tom is admittedly an odd boy: an innocent and affectionate young animal, with pronounced feminine characteristics. He inspires romantic affection in Deverell, a young poacher, whom he assists, at a crisis, to flee the country. And, taking leave of him—"'You can kiss me if you like,' said Tom simply." I refrain from telling the secret of the plot, since suspense and surprise are necessary to its full enjoyment.

Miss Adelaide Phillpotts possesses at least two of the several gifts that go to the making of a novelist of the first order: a copious imagination, and a resolve to tell the truth. Her new novel is long and full: it inspires one not only with the liveliest hopes for her future but with a considerable respect for her past. Mr. Graham Greene is an expert story-teller, and he has on this occasion a good story to tell. But he is so resolutely and laboriously romantic that one can believe scarcely a word he says. The (psychological) drama is dressed up in all the colours of carnival; the emotions of his characters are largely theatrical; he achieves definition of falsification. He has, nevertheless, abundant talent. Mrs. Millin tells the story of two brothers in whom I find it difficult to be much interested: I remember, with a certain wistfulness, her little masterpiece, *Mary Glenn*. My sixth, *Dusty Death*, is a brisk detective tale set mainly in Geneva; and my seventh, *The Red King Dreams*, is a ponderous whimsy.

GERALD BULLETT.

PAINTING IN FRANCE

An Account of French Painting. By CLIVE BELL. Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d.

It is surprising what an amount of information on the history of French Art Mr. Clive Bell has been able to compress into this short book. With Mr. Bell for a guide the most ignorant will receive all the preliminary information necessary to put him in position for appreciating every phase of the secular artistic expression of the French genius. Moreover, as he passes from century to century, Mr. Bell will regale him by the way with a good deal of incidental information about his own personality, about his tastes and his way of life. This engaging familiarity in his discourse will probably make his account accessible to a great many people who would be rebuffed by the formal manners of a learned treatise. In fact, Mr. Bell's style is so lively, his movement is so rapid and exhilarating, that it would be less than the truth to say that one devours it like a novel, since it is more lucid and more readable than the vast majority of such books. This is not only "French Painting without Tears," but with a good deal of very agreeable amusement. It marks the immense distance which we have moved since late Victorian days, when all art had to be written almost in a tone of lachrymose edification or melancholy yearning, when it was bad form to speak above a whisper in front of a Holman Hunt or a Rossetti. Mr. Clive Bell anyhow makes art seem quite a pleasant affair. With him for a guide, one feels that the enjoyment of painting is one of the less exhausting pleasures of society. He speaks as a man of the world who instinctively dislikes nonsense, humbug and pretentiousness, but who welcomes the good manners which come from being natural and unselfconscious. Mr. Bell disclaims any pretence to learning, but he has more than enough for his purpose, which is to enable his reader to appreciate the paintings themselves rather than to qualify for an examination. Like everyone who gets into close touch with the artists through their works, he has his own special likes and dislikes, but he is never pontifical; and if he yields to his personal bias, at least his predilections are those of a man of wide sympathies and with no theoretical axes to grind.

In his early chapters he clears up the complicated and paradoxical situation which the known remains of French mediæval painting presents. He sweeps aside a great deal of patriotic special pleading by saying that whilst we have French paintings of the period there was not, so far as we can discover, any French school of painting. This, which everyone who knows the works in question must admit, is a very surprising fact when we consider that there were vigorous indigenous schools of architecture, of miniature and of glass painting.

Mr. Bell despatches the Italianising art of the Fontainebleau school perhaps a little too impatiently. He has nothing but contempt for those Italian masters who brought the tradition with them. It would, I think, be possible to show from some of his frescoes in Italian churches that Zucchero was by no means a "miserable master." He certainly had his own rather fascinating colour harmonies. But in the main Mr. Bell's account of the sixteenth century Italianisers and portraitists is discriminating and just.

Almost all that he has to say about the eighteenth century is admirable. It is a period he loves and understands. He feels that he is at home in its salons, and he realises how largely the art of the time was ancillary to the life of good society. It was not a great self-sufficing expression of fundamental truths but an art of *agrément*, of good manners and decorative charm, and Mr. Bell relishes it keenly without yielding too obviously to the temptation to overestimate its importance, except perhaps that now and then Boucher's *Petite Morphil* turns his head. He seems almost inclined to place Boucher on a plane with Fragonard, in which I suspect few critics would support him. Throughout this period Diderot's criticisms afford him a delightful comic relief of which he makes good use, and his account of the growth of sentimental anecdotic painting and its disastrous consequences in the nineteenth century is illuminating. He perhaps overestimates the French claim to patent rights in this horrible discovery, for really our own Reynolds was independently feeling his way towards a similar end.

The disease was in the air.

Mr. Bell's treatment of the nineteenth century is, in the main, an abbreviation of what he has already said in his *Landmarks in Nineteenth Century Painting*, which is to say that it is thoroughly appreciative of the great qualities of that heroic period when the artist was pitted alike against culture and ignorance, and (by what miracle!) won. It is always a thrilling story, and it loses nothing of its passionate interest in Mr. Bell's telling. His breezy, witty matter-of-fact tone should not make the reader doubt that he cares intensely for what art implies in the spiritual life of man.

ROGER FRY.

PARAMOUNT INTERESTS

Report of the Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament on "Closer Union in East Africa." H.M. Stationery Office. 1s. 6d.

This report closes, it may be hoped, at any rate two chapters of that East African comedy, the humours of which have been from time to time irreverently surveyed in these columns. Those chapters ought never to have been opened. The question of "closer union" had been left in its proper place by the Ormsby-Gore Commission of 1924, and the obligations and policy of the British Government in regard to the relative rights of natives and settlers had been quite clearly and satisfactorily laid down in the Duke of Devonshire's White Paper (Indians in Kenya) of 1923. The Ormsby-Gore Commission "came definitely to the conclusion that any attempt at federation of the East African Colonies and Protectorates would be premature." They emphasised the importance of co-ordination by consultation in regard to Transport, Customs, Scientific and Educational services, and that there should be regular periodic conferences of Governors and responsible officials of various departments. The Select Committee point out that transport in Kenya and Uganda has already been unified, and are of opinion that the existing arrangements afford all the basis necessary for better co-operation, only suggesting the creation of a new post of Adviser on Transport for these territories, together with Tanganyika. There is already a Customs Union: they think that better provision might be made for scientific services applicable to the whole area, and they repeat the view that all else that may be necessary can be done by the Governor's conferences, the usefulness of which they think would be reinforced if they were attended by an officer deputed whenever desirable from the Colonial Office.

As to the "paramountcy" of native interests as a basic principle for the exercise of our position of Trusteeship, which the Duke of Devonshire had declared to apply as fully to Kenya as to Tanganyika, the Select Committee, with a preliminary

apology for what might be deemed a rather wide interpretation of the reference made to them, very wholesomely thought it their duty to lay the dust which has been stirred up on that topic during the last five years on behalf of the Kenya settlers' party. They endorse and authoritatively establish the position set forth in the White Paper of 1923, the Hilton Young Commission's Report, and the memorandum on Native Policy (Cmd. 3573) promulgated in 1930 by Lord Passfield on behalf of the Labour Government.

These two subjects, then, are now disposed of for at any rate a long enough period for the work to be got on with which ought to have proceeded uninterruptedly on the basis of the Ormsby-Gore Report, and which would have been so doing, but for the fantastic and mischievous Delamere-Grigg-Amery filibustering sally officially launched in Mr. Amery's White Paper of 1927, which it has taken two costly and procrastinating missions to East Africa and ten months' sittings of this Joint Select Committee to flatten out. The comic aspects of that enterprise as developed by the Hilton Young Commission have been exhibited in THE NEW STATESMAN, as was the rather more serious significance of Sir Samuel Wilson's Report. Briefly I may recall that the great Closer Union project was inspired by two ambitions (1) to preclude any traitorous Labour Government from restoring Tanganyika to Germany (!) and to establish the paramountcy there of British interests, and (2) to enhance the importance of the Governor of Kenya, and to install a self-governing white community of that Colony as the dominant authority for general policy throughout the territories. When this enterprise showed ominous signs of not being likely to march according to plan, the final extravaganza of the farce was presented in a moving appeal to General Hertzog to join hands with Lord Delamere as the champion of western civilization against the rising flood of barbarism in Africa. Strange to say, the General was actually drawn—and warned England that South Africa had a right to be consulted on native policy in British East: an absent-minded move which was promptly jumped on by Sir James Rose-Innes, who observed that on that principle the British Government must be held to have a right to say something about South African native policy: after which no more was heard of that particular S.O.S. of the settlers' champions.

The hearing, by a picked body of Members of Parliament, many of them with strongly divergent previous views on Kenya questions, of representatives of the European settlers, the native communities, and the officials, under the admirable chairmanship of the late Lord Stanley of Alderley, has been most salutary for the consolidation of sound opinion. And the committee have not confined themselves to generalities as to the attitude to be maintained towards both native and European interests, but have given very positive and pertinent suggestions for the application of their principles. As to the Constitution of Kenya, they may well be excused for having abstained from any suggestions for its amendment beyond that of improved nominated representation of Native interests. They were not asked to advise on the subject, but their attitude amounts to a pretty strong hint to make no other change, and with this position the Kenya settlers' party will no doubt have to stay content for some time to come. The Indian community can hardly be expected to be content, but as the *Times* Nairobi correspondent suggests they may comfort themselves with the recognition that while their political claims have received no encouragement those of the settlers are no better favoured.

The Report abstains from any attempt to prejudice further developments on democratic political lines, and it establishes for the present a quite sufficient basis for a far more loyal administration of our trust for East African interests than it has been the lot of Kenya hitherto to enjoy. It now rests with the Colonial Office to make good this declaration of Parliamentary will.

OLIVIER.

NOT MATTER OF FACT

Return to Yesterday. By FORD MADOX FORD. Gollancz. 18s.

To write a good and interesting book of this kind may to the uninitiated seem an easy enough task. As a matter of fact the difficulties in the way are very great. At each moment the author finds himself confronted by an *impasse*. Thus: he wishes to relate how Mr. A. insulted Mr. B. at Mrs. C.'s dining table. A. B. and C. are dead; but D., who was present also, is very much alive; and as A. was his friend he will in the first place resent the raking up of the affair, and, in the second, declare that it was B. who insulted A. The only thing the story-teller can do by way of self-protection is to say, "Such is my impression of what occurred;—if I am wrong, the atmosphere surrounding—that of the dining table—is right." And that is what Mr. Ford does say, or rather repeats.

It is a repetition, because twenty years back he wrote his *Memories of a Young Man*, and in the dedication he said: "This book is full of inaccuracies as to facts, but its accuracy as to impression is absolute." In the dedication to his present book he says: "This is a novel. Where it has seemed expedient to me I have altered episodes that I have witnessed, but I have been careful never to distort the character of the episode. The accuracies I deal in are the accuracies of my impressions. If you want factual accuracies you must go to . . ." It is necessary to bear this declaration well in mind at nearly every page of Mr. Ford's reminiscences. A reader who will do this, and who is in harmony with the author, will certainly enjoy his reminiscences very much.

He must do so, because Mr. Ford is an excellent writer. It is true that prose, good as his undoubtedly is, is not his best medium. We believe that in the time it takes him to write a page of it he could pen two of verse, and with more felicity and enjoyment to himself. In fairness to him let the reader remember this; for poets do not see things as ordinary mortals see them—and the reader is the gainer. Here is an instance. Mr. Ford writes:

> I had written to ask Mr. Arnold Bennett who was then in Paris, to give me something. . . . Presently arrived Pinker, the agent, with a short story . . Pinker asked me forty pounds for it. I gave him thirty, saying that Mr. Bennett had never received anything like that sum before for a short story. Pinker went off with the cheque quite contentedly.
>
> The story duly appeared. On the day after its publication I received a letter from Mr. Bennett:
>
> "My dear H—, You owe me ten pounds. That story for which you paid Pinker thirty pounds was honestly worth forty."
>
> I answered:
>
> "My dear Bennett, I offered to pay you any sum you liked to ask for a contribution. You preferred to send me your agent.

IN shirts and soft collars, as in pyjamas, what a man *wants* and what he *receives* will always correspond while the name "LUVISCA" is his guide. Smooth texture that doesn't resent even a workaday life. Shapely style that is a credit with any suit. *Your* likings have been well studied; inspect the ranges now being shown. British manufacture.

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LOOK FOR THE REGISTERED TAB.

If any difficulty in obtaining, write COURTAULDS, LTD. (Dept. 143M.), 16 St. Martin's-le-Grand, London, E.C.1, for the name of your nearest retailer and descriptive literature.

Agents are created by God to be beaten down. He sold the story to me for thirty pounds. I do not owe you anything."

Two days later I got a letter from Mr. Bennett. It read:

"My dear H—, You owe me ten pounds. That story for which you paid Pinker thirty pounds was honestly worth forty."

I told Miss Thomas to send him my first answer over again. I added "H.G. tells me you are coming to London next Thursday. If you will dine with me that night and meet some friends I shall be delighted."

On the Thursday we were working in the office when there walked in a youngish man who said something I did not catch. Miss Thomas said:

"He says he is Bennett."

I said:

"Oh, yes, the hats are on the stairs."

In those days I used to have a great number of top-hats so as to be assured of having always a newly ironed one to wear. They were supplied by the classic firm of Lincoln and Bennett, who used periodically to send someone to take them away and iron them.

The stranger said:

"You owe me ten pounds. That story you bought of Pinker was honestly worth forty . . . If you will give me a cheque for ten pounds I will go home and dress and come back and dine with you. If you won't, I won't."

I was so overcome that I said to the inaudibly protesting Miss Thomas that she had better give Mr. Bennett his cheque. He took it and went off with grim satisfaction. He duly came to dinner. It was honestly worth ten pounds.

That is an admirably told story which no one would wish to disprove, not even those who have heard Arnold Bennett's less picturesque and more credible version.

But when Mr. Ford gravely informs us that Mrs. Lynn Linton and Mrs. Mona Caird as sisters in thought advocated in novels unheard-of things, and writes of *Miss* Garrett Anderson: when he says that Mrs. Constance Garnett's family "had long been engaged in Russian trade": when he asserts that Mr. Watts-Dunton was his guardian and the literary editor of the *Athenæum*: and that Mathilde Blind was his grandfather's adopted daughter it is rather trying, even though his book is a novel.

But one forgives him because he is always so very readable, and, at times, so very generous. And then he can say very just and admirable things. Thus in allusion to Joseph Conrad and Stephen Crane he writes: "They were both very simple people really. All great authors are. If you are not simple you are not observant. If you are not observant you cannot write. But you must observe simply. The first characteristic of great writing is a certain humility."

That is true and is well-expressed. Mr. Ford can occasionally think and often can write as well as Crane or Conrad; but his thought is in flashes only, and his peculiar but not disagreeable form of egotism is too often much in evidence. His abilities are unquestionable, but equally so are his faults. Still, in spite of his disdain of facts, his powers of observation, though not his humility, are so great that he is well worth the attention of the discriminating reader.

Mr. Ford will be best remembered by his literary association with Conrad, the novelist of genius. His own fifty books, from his first novel, *The Shifting of the Fire*, onward, have the common defect that they are *pastiches* rather than original works; but they are undeniably clever, and the series about Tietjens has an uncomfortable genuineness. The present book, though composed of rich material, is unsatisfactory even as reading matter because its author is often ill at ease with himself. He seems perpetually to fear the ringing challenge of the living, the murmured voice of the dead. Labour as he may to give his "impressions," he knows by experience that they will awake contradiction if not hostility. The mistake that many of his readers are likely to make is that on account of his inaccuracies nothing in his book is at all trustworthy. In one sense it is not; but in another he is well justified, for he has without doubt given a marvellous reproduction of an atmosphere.

AN INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMIC THEORY

The Approach to Economics. By H. M. Scott. Christophers. 4s. 6d.

Miss Scott, in her first book, has set herself a difficult task. Her aim is an introductory book for readers "who have never done any economics before . . . written in the simplest possible language, and drawing as much as possible on examples familiar to everyone." To embark on such a venture—so often essayed, so seldom successfully accomplished—requires a high degree of courage. The trouble with economics is that the "Approach" to its mysteries opens up a very real dilemma. From the beginner's point of view, its principles are of little interest unless, and until, they are intelligibly related to the facts of the social order. Yet to present this relationship effectively demands, not a volume, but an encyclopædia. The author of a first text-book must therefore choose, and choose at the outset, between a theoretical statement which takes social facts for granted and a synopsis of such facts inadequately, if at all, explained. It is no criticism of a work of some 200 pages that this dilemma has not been satisfactorily negotiated. The thing simply cannot be done.

Miss Scott has put her money on theory rather than fact; she does not say as much about the world we live in as her preface might perhaps be held to imply. The reader must take it from her that the complex phenomena she sets out to explain do in fact respond along the lines which she indicates to this tendency or that. The various influences—political, ethical, psychological—by which the behaviour of men and women in the mass is actuated, and the institutional framework within which economic forces work themselves out, must necessarily be taken for granted.

Subject to these difficulties, which no amount of ingenuity on Miss Scott's part could overcome, she has produced a readable and carefully written introduction to economic theory. Admittedly, she writes in the classical tradition; Marshall is her prophet, as interpreted at the London School of Economics, but Miss Scott presents the elements of his theories on new, and perhaps improved, lines. She begins with markets and the central problem of price determination, passing on subsequently to productive organisation and to the distribution of income. Her generalisations in this latter field are necessarily somewhat sketchy. As she remarks in her comments on a suggested short bibliography "there is no easy work on profits." She would have done no great violence to her native caution if she had said "there is no satisfactory theory of profits."

The last four chapters of the book deal with problems of applied economics—with public finance, with the trade cycle, with

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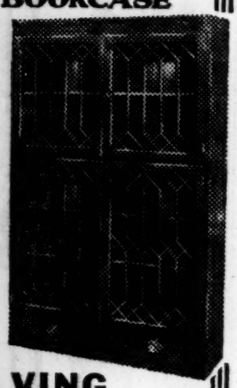

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unemployment and with tariffs. It is here that the difficulties of compressed statement are most evident. Miss Scott shows a quite admirable balance in indicating how economic principles should be applied, but the outlines of the problems themselves never really emerge. The effect on the man of affairs may well be to make him more sceptical than ever of the value of an economic training. As a classroom text-book, on the other hand, Miss Scott's "Approach" deserves serious consideration.

ELEPHANTIASIS

Goethe and Beethoven. By ROMAIN ROLLAND. Hamish Hamilton. 18s.

M. Romain Rolland has become one of the most tiresome writers in the world, which is a pity, because he possesses enthusiasm and industry. Would that he also possessed sobriety, a sense of proportion, and humour! His lack of humour infects even the translators of this book, Messrs. Pfister and Kemp, who, catching his disease of writing-elephantiasis, write a prefatory note in which the words "giant," "universal," "gigantic," "colossal" are like blows aimed at the skull of the reader on the assumption that it is empty and will crack easily. But those who have full and hard heads will find these loud noises merely irritating, especially when the translators show they do not even understand the use of the apostrophe.

Nothing could be less convincing than the pomp with which M. Rolland speaks of himself and his work: "I have compared the writing of my book, *Beethoven: the Creator*, to a journey to the depths of Cyclopes' smithy." This is the style in which the pundits of daily journalism are accustomed to write nowadays. Do they expect to be believed? We think not. They are daily acrobats for whom it is sufficient to have attracted a momentary attention. To-morrow they will appear in a new disguise saying exactly the contrary with equal magniloquence. But M. Rolland, we assume, has a care that we shall believe what he says and that there is some meaning in what he says. His present book is not all mere exclamations and apostrophes; nevertheless there is something fundamentally unsound about it, and this falsity and insincerity is fully exhibited in the paragraph with which he concludes his introduction:

> Music, I repeat, is the heroine of my story. I present her not only as the companion of Beethoven-Dionysus, but as a Muse also; to Goethe, the Apollo of Weimar, she is not the least beloved of the Muses, a fact too little known. The main object of my book is to remind my hearers that the greatest poet of modern Europe belongs also to the fellowship of musicians. He is the river into which the twain converge, into which flow the twin streams of poetry and music, as do indeed all the streams of our Earth.

The step from the sublime to the ridiculous is one which M. Rolland finds impossible to resist. To the reader who is sensitive to words and metaphors and for whom they have a meaning, the noisy bathos of M. Rolland's style is almost unendurable. M. Rolland never considers precisely what it is he is saying so long as a fat, sounding period roars in his ears. For example, "all the streams of our Earth" is nothing but resounding oratory to M. Rolland. To him it no doubt suggests a Handelian chorus, perhaps the "Hallelujah" chorus. Drains, sewers, polluted rivers and infected waters are also among "the streams of our Earth" but the sentimental and idealistic M. Rolland is unaware of such things. He dwells in a Cloud-cuckoo land of rhetoric: "and when Beethoven died, Zelter did not dare to speak of him to Goethe, although in secret his soul saluted the shade of the demigod."

In the midst of all this fustian there are brief notes and quotations which reveal M. Rolland's wide reading. His book will be useful as a work of reference in which students of the period may be put on to the sources of much out-of-the-way information. The greater part of the text—except for occasional gleams of insight—is sheer rhodomontade, and in the course of reading this verbiage one becomes doubtful whether M. Rolland has sufficient musical instinct and understanding to write about Beethoven at all. What seems to appeal to him is not the musical genius of Beethoven but the notion of a Titan. Well, one would not object if M. Rolland found some such element in Beethoven and tried to help us to understand it, even if he was quite unaware of other equally important elements; but when we discover that he also thinks Wagner a Titan we perceive that M. Rolland is not writing about anything at all, that he has no clear notion either of a Titan or of a musician and in short that his whole book is little but nonsense.

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The End of Extraterritoriality in China. By THOMAS F. MILLARD (Adviser to the Government of the Republic of China). A.B.C. Press, Shanghai, and *China Review*, 39, Temple, E.C.4. 7s. 6d.

Dr. Millard speaks with knowledge and authority, and this book gives the fullest and plainest account of the extraterritoriality question that we have seen. Besides the text, it contains a number of valuable appendices, dealing with constitutional and legal matters relevant to the main problem.

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The annual tax on a baby car is normally £7, and the cost of insurance represents another £7. These are the fixed and definite charges. The remaining debits vary with mileage, personality, and luck. A 7 h.p. car in good order averages about forty miles per gallon of petrol. The cost of petrol is perpetually varying, but to simplify the arithmetic of an imaginary owner, we will estimate it at 1s. 6d. per gallon. The ordinary private owner covers 5,000 miles per season, which implies petrol costs of £9 7s. 6d. If a keen and energetic owner doubles this typical mileage, his petrol bill will also be doubled, and amount to £18 15s. The oil consumption should be at the rate of about 1,000 miles per gallon, and good oil, purchased in bulk, costs about 5s. per gallon. Thus the oil bill for an average owner is £1 5s. per annum; and a doubled mileage raises it to £2 10s.

The next heavy item to be discussed is the tyre bill; and here we deal with indefinite facts. A brand new baby car should require no new covers until late in its second season. A used car may demand four new covers in the very first year. If the owner never drives on under-inflated tyres; is quick to feel a deflating tube; stops swiftly when a tyre bursts; and habitually inspects the covers for flints and nails, a minimum tyre bill is assured. But if an owner is casual about inflation and slow to perceive that slight steering drag which implies a flattish front tyre, or the mild bumping which indicates that a back tyre needs more air, the average life of his or her covers may be reduced to some such absurd figure as 3,000 miles. It is quite impossible to dogmatise about a stranger's probable behaviour in such matters. Perhaps this Gordian knot had better be cut by saying that £5 per annum should cover the tyre expenses of the most extravagant fool; and that a sane and intelligent user should run a baby car 5,000 miles per annum on tyre costs of 50s.

It is equally impossible to estimate the frequency with which an imaginary owner will employ a professional mechanic to diagnose a misfire, or tighten a fan belt, or mend a puncture, or touch up a scraped wing, or adjust brakes which have grown flabby. Many women owners tackle all such jobs for themselves. Some male owners always ring up the nearest repairer. We have, nevertheless, arrived at a basic budget for 5,000 miles with a second-hand baby car; and it reads somewhat as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Loss of interest	4	0	0
Depreciation	20	0	0
Tax	7	0	0
Insurance	7	0	0
Petrol	9	7	6
Oil	1	5	0
Tyre expenses	2	10	0
	£51	2	6

In this statement there are two obvious and confessed omissions—the elastic item usually known as "sundries," and the consequential expenses due to planning outings through enthusiasm for motoring, and its many conveniences. The first of these omissions may vary from nil to a ten pound note, but can hardly exceed the latter sum. The second item pivots on the self control of the individual, and may reach a very formidable figure indeed. In spite of a general reluctance to dogmatise, we have approached the conclusion that £60 per annum is a very good guess.

R. E. DAVIDSON.

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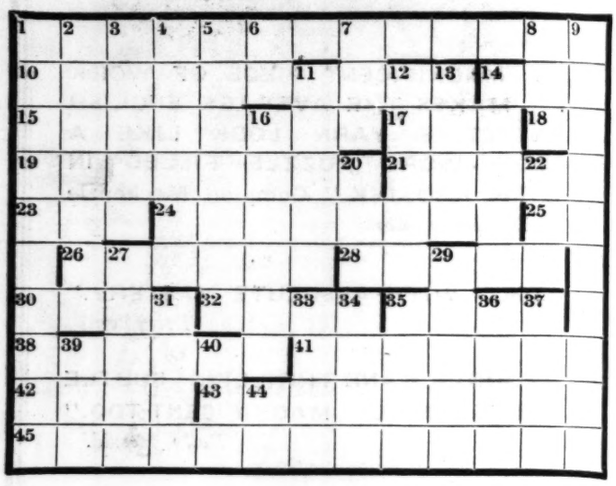

VIN ORDINAIRE

ACROSS.

1. You have heard of me before.
10. My measurements are not exactly straight.
14. Priest you might look for at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign.
15. Do as they did to Stephen.
17. See 28.
18. Product of sulphur with 7 *dn.*
19. My purchase may follow a voluntary stoppage.
21. Reverse of nasty accident.
23. Has made Londonderry famous.
24. Solution of dandelion.
25. I suppose it's all right in chokee.
26. Doctorates begin with these.
28. Antidote with 17 following.
30. These are sometimes right in the Army.
32. O. E. are much favoured at Southend.
35. I'm pretty well everywhere with little Constance.
38. Well, turned out.
41. The artist's (first again back) at the end of the Fall.
42. My Major is a well-known guide.
43. Caliban must look for his leads elsewhere.
45. He ought to get engaged to a "Quaker."

DOWN.

1. The Tree family are inclined to be this.
2. City it is difficult to penetrate.
3. What a' ripish pomegranate can become.
4. Cut out and turn up.
5. Upheaval in the domain of Paul I.
6. The printer must have pushed me over.
7. Obtained by skinning Lutra.
8. Eugene's desire was under me and 40 *dn.*
9. I lick others' work into shape.
11. A backward condition.
12. I'm worked a good deal harder than I used to be.
13. I roll rapidly backwards.
14. The opposite of empty.
16. Arma virumque cano.
20. The unit meets with a reverse.
22. Old more.
27. There's a little article missing from the boot.
29. Uncle Sam's idea of strength.
31. A mingled draught.
33 *rev.* Something hirsute.
34. Mr. Lindrum puts me on.
35. I suppose it was inverted on purpose.
36. Another outrage on the L.N.E.R.
37. Bores, what?
39. Practice now obsolete.
40. See 8.
44. Beginnings of an age.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

(References to *Macbeth* in italics)

ACROSS.—1. *Thane of Glamis* (*I, 3*). 12. (pan)acea *rev.* 13. Amir. 14. elève. 16. chirp. 18. talk. 19. Noa(h). 20. tael. 21. lifyl (filly). 22. iarm (mari). 23. atro(pine). 25. you(ng). 26. manna. 28. (vit)reous. 30. n(i)l. 31. re-sign. 34. Kant. 36. *primrose* (*II, 3*). 39. r-oar. 41. oar. 42. vit. 43. not. 45. (rago)ut. 46. *dudgeon* (*II, 1*). 47. rude. 48. *Thane of Cawdor* (*I, 3*).

DOWN.—1. *Tartar* (*IV, 1*). 2. *Hecate* (*III, 5*). 3. *Acheron* (*III, 5*). 4. nail. 5. earl-y. 6. O.M. 7. *fitful* (*III, 2*). 8, 9. *Graymalkin* (*I, 1*). 10. Ivor(y). 11. sea-monster. 14. (St)ella. 15. *Dunsinane rev.* (*V, 5*). 17. pion. 24. outrun. 27. age (*Dangerous Ages*). 29. spode. 31. R.M. 32. Erin. 33. sot. 34. *Turk rev.* (*IV, 1*). 35. toa(sting) *rev.* 37. rago(ut). 38. (f)ire-f. 40. Ada(ptation). 42. voc.(ative). 44. Odo. 47. R.W. (Right Worshipful).

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(1) A bid for more than a game contract, *e.g.*, a raise of partner's opening bid of One Heart to Five Hearts.

(2) A continuation of the bidding after a game contract has been reached, *e.g.*, a bid of Five Clubs over partner's Four Hearts.

(3) A direct overbid of the adversary's suit (which also shows control of the suit bid).

Thus, if South deals, and bids One Heart; West One Spade; North, holding: ♠ none ♥ K ♥ ♥ ♦ A Q J ♦ ♦ ♣ K J ♣ ♣ should bid Two Spades. This indicates the make-up of the hand more explicitly than would a raise to Five Hearts, and ensures that the bidding will be kept open.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR

STOCK EXCHANGE RESTRICTIONS—GILT-EDGED STOCKS AND THE GUILDHALL BANQUET—WHITELEY'S AND SELFRIDGE'S

HAVING protested on former occasions against Stock Exchange restrictions I must gratefully acknowledge the restoration of fortnightly accounts, as from November 16th, in place of cash dealings. But looking this gift horse carefully in the mouth I find its most important teeth missing: no fresh option or contango business is yet to be allowed. I have always argued that an incipient "boom" in industrial equities would best be checked, not by restrictions, but by allowing "bear" operators to sell short. But will the "bears" be tempted to move if they are bound to cover within the fortnight? The risks of being "squeezed" are surely too great. Now because I have adopted the name of a "bull" fighter I am no lover of the "bear," but I must admit that the "bear" plays a very useful part in the Stock Exchange arena. Without "bear" operations to counter "bull," security markets would become narrow and artificial. Mr. Richard Whitney, President of the New York Stock Exchange, made this clear enough in a recent address given to the Hartford Chamber of Commerce. "Short selling," he said, "by restraining inflation and cushioning sharp declines, tends to stabilise the fluctuations of prices." The proof he gave was highly instructive. When Great Britain suspended the gold standard the New York Stock Exchange Committee were afraid of a great flood of selling. So they decided to mobilise the "bear" interest (which amounted to 4,241,000 shares on Sept. 18th) by putting a ban on short selling. In other words they induced the "bears" to cover, so that the buying of the "shorts" enabled the panicky investors to sell without upsetting the market. But within two hours the Committee found that "there was a real danger of technical corners and of crazy and dangerous price advances." Thereupon they allowed a limited amount of short selling. "These facts," said Mr. Whitney, "prove that a complete prohibition of short selling could not be enforced for even two hours without creating an unnatural and dangerous market." It has taken the London Stock Exchange Committee seven weeks to find this out, during which time not a few industrial shares have risen by more than 250 per cent.

* * *

Restrictions on legitimate trading in securities merely drive business away from the Stock Exchange. This is to be deplored on public as well as private grounds, for an enlightened State would never tolerate the unregulated and often disorderly enterprise of outside brokers. The ban on option dealings, for example, has already stimulated option business of a very undesirable kind outside the Stock Exchange. The ban on advertising is another restriction which does more harm than good. I hope that members of the Stock Exchange studied the report of Sir Arthur Wheeler's trial. It was stated that the stock-broking business of Sir Arthur Wheeler and Company at one time had a turnover exceeding £10,000,000 per annum, and that during the two or three years before its ruin it never dropped below £6,000,000 a year. This provincial business was entirely built up on circularising and self-advertisement. Clearly, a very large number of country people must have found the service just what they wanted—until, of course, Sir Arthur succumbed to the temptation to use their money to bolster up his tottering financial position. The Kylsant case may also point a moral for the Stock Exchange Committee. The bitter jest about the Kylsant case is that the investor has lost much more money by subscribing to issues on prospectuses which have merely shown a fraudulent cheerfulness about future earnings than on prospectuses which have fraudulently concealed past earnings. I suggest that "leave to deal" on the Stock Exchange should not be granted in cases where the public prospectus or advertisement "for information only" appears to convey a false impression about future prospects by concealment of the material "snags." In withholding "leave to deal," the Stock Exchange Committee is in the happy position of being judge and jury in one, for it is not called upon to explain or justify its actions to anybody.

* * *

The gilt-edged market examined the Prime Minister's speech at the Guildhall Banquet carefully for a lead. It had, of course, to read between the lines. It assumes that the Government intends to devalue ("to take steps which will most surely tend to stabilise on a definite basis,") but is not going to hurry about it ("We have important interests of our own to safeguard in any settlement"). Meanwhile, until definite stabilisation is reached, the Government will prevent an excessive rise in prices ("the substantial maintenance of the internal purchasing value of sterling"). The interpretation of this policy for the gilt-edged market is fairly plain. As the retail cost of living is not to be allowed to advance by more than, say, 7½ per cent. as a result of the present depreciation in sterling—so as to prevent any demand for an increase in wages—there will be no progressive inflation, no chasing of prices by wages in a never-ending spiral. Hence there will be no fundamental deterioration in the value of fixed-interest securities. What reduction does occur in the purchasing power of the pound will affect all money incomes alike. The ratio previously existing between the market price of £100 capital and the fixed interest payable thereon is not disturbed. For the long-dated British Government funds this ratio (that is, the yield) is determined by the general level of long-term interest rates. A high Bank rate of 6 per cent. is supposed to be a temporary phenomenon which should not be allowed to drive up the general level of long-term interest rates. Nevertheless, the Government is in no hurry about stabilisation, and a relatively high Bank rate may be unduly prolonged for some ridiculous notion that it attracts or retains foreign balances and so steadies the exchanges. Hence the long-dated British Government stocks are exposed to an indefinite adverse influence. This I take to be the reasoning of the gilt-edged market. But the same conclusion might have been reached by an examination of the technical market position. The joint stock banks are loaded up with British Government securities which they are bound to sell as and when they have to meet increasing trade demands for credit. A default in Germany on all commercial debts, including, of course, those falling due on March 1st on the expiry of the "standstill" agreement, would probably hasten bank liquidation in the gilt-edged market, for the joint stock banks are not only involved in German credits, but are helping others who are more deeply committed and less strong. The private investor would, therefore, do well to exchange from the long-dated into the short-dated Government stocks.

* * *

Mr. Gordon Selfridge should be very angry with the Stock Exchange. His company guarantees a 25 per cent. dividend on the 450,000 ordinary shares of £1 of William Whiteley up to April, 1942. This guarantee, being an obligation legally enforceable, creates a charge on Selfridge's profits prior to the 6 per cent. tax free cumulative preference shares and the 10 per cent. cumulative preferred ordinary shares of Selfridge & Company. Yet the Stock Exchange quotes the last two securities at 19s. 6d. and 20s. 6d. to yield 6.15 per cent. tax free and 9½ per cent. respectively whereas it allows the 25 per cent. cumulative ordinary shares of William Whiteley to be bought at 33s. to yield no less than £15 3s. per cent. What is wrong? If Selfridge & Company default on their William Whiteley guarantee they must also default on their own preference shares. Of course, the guarantee is limited to a little over ten years, but assuming that Selfridge & Company can meet it, the buyer of 100 William Whiteley ordinary shares (costing £165) will have received by April, 1942, about £250 in dividends (before deducting tax)—in other words, his money back with £85 profit and a free parcel of 100 shares. Selfridge's profits last year, after depreciation and debenture interest, were £315,442, out of which they paid £100,554 under the Whiteley guarantee. This year they may have to pay the whole of the guaranteed dividend—namely, £112,500. But there is always the possibility that Whiteley's will gradually improve its earning power, in which case the ordinary shares would surely appreciate, guarantee or no guarantee. And as Selfridge's hold the Whiteley 1s. deferred shares, there is a strong inducement for Selfridge's to put Whiteley's on their commercial feet.

* * *

"Rubbish" shares.—An apparently indignant correspondent has pointed out that I was inaccurate in stating that the Chemical and Metallurgical plant worked at 50 per cent. capacity last year. This should have referred only to the plant for manufacturing certain chemicals. I was quite aware that these 2s. shares at 5½d. were as near to "rubbish" as one can go (the other shares I mentioned were of better class) and I am sorry if I gave any reader a wrong impression.

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All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10, *Great Queen Street, Kingsway, London, W.C.2. The Postage on this issue is: Inland,* 1d.; *Foreign,* 1½d.; *Canada,* 1d.

THE news from Paris is bad. All the efforts of the League Council to bring Japan to reason have proved fruitless and, as we write, there is a complete deadlock. Equally bad, or worse, is the news from Manchuria. On Wednesday there was a battle on the Nonni river, in which the Japanese overwhelmed a much larger force of Chinese under General Ma. The victors have occupied Anganchi on the Chinese Eastern Railway, and the town of Tsitsihar some miles to the north. They are thus in the Russian sphere of influence, and if they are going to dig themselves in there, the situation will be extremely dangerous. It is in any case serious, for the Chinese Eastern Railway, which is operated jointly by the U.S.S.R. and China, is a continuation of the Trans-Siberian, and its occupation in this region must paralyse the traffic between Vladivostok and Moscow and cause material loss to the Russians.

* * *

It is little more than a week ago that the newspapers of Paris and London, with the *Daily Mail* in the van, were circulating reports of mischievous Russian activities. The Soviet Government, it was said, were assisting the Chinese with munitions and with the loan of officers and men. Mr. Litvinoff emphatically denied the truth of these rumours, and made a strong protest to the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow. The *Daily Mail*, so far as we could see, made no reference to this denial and protest. The charge of aggressive intentions on the part of Russia is absurd to anyone who understands the facts; the last thing she wants, at a moment when all her energies are absorbed in the business of the Five Year Plan, is war. Nor do the Japanese, we should imagine, want war with Russia; they have quite enough on hand for the present with the Chinese. But if trouble should come out of their action on the Eastern Railway, could even the *Daily Mail* persuade its readers that the Bolsheviks were the aggressors?

* * *

The *Daily Mail*, which always loves war as a fly loves carrion, has also started to retail unsubstantiated stories of Chinese atrocities. On the eve of Sir John Simon's departure to Paris it stated that he, at any rate, was not the kind of man to be "carried away by the fanatical pacifists." In the Beaverbrook Press, which personifies the religion of nationalism in its maddest form, there is open rejoicing that the League is impotent. If such papers were alone in refusing to understand the obligations incurred by membership of the League of Nations, no great harm might be done. But the *Times* and *Daily Telegraph* follow the almost unanimous French press in taking the Japanese side in the dispute. This is an extraordinary and discreditable fact. For whatever the merits of the